

MEDITATIONS
AND
CONTEMPLATIONS.
IN TWO VOLUMES.

CONTAINING,

VOL. I.	VOL. II.
MEDITATIONS among the TOMBS;	CONTEMPLATIONS on the NIGHT;
REFLECTIONS on a FLOWER-GARDEN;	CONTEMPLATIONS on the STARRY
And, A DESCANT on CREATION.	HEAVENS; And, A WINTER-PIECE.

By JAMES HERVEY, A.M.
Rector of Weston-Favell, in Northamptonshire.

The ELEVENTH EDITION.

VOL. II.

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and Crown, in St. Paul's Church-yard.

MDCCLIII.



The FRONTISPIECE

Exhibits a View of the nocturnal Heavens.—On the Top of an OBSERVATORY, two Persons examine the celestial Bodies with their Telescopes : Instruments, which gave Rise to the most important Improvements in the Science of *Astronomy*.

An aged Philosopher is represented, instructing his Pupils : He describes, with his Compasses, the Order and Courses of the Planets ; according to the *Newtonian* Hypothesis, intimated by a Book bearing that great Author's Name.---The whole Tenour of the Lecture, in Concert with the whole Structure and Economy of the Skies, ENARRANT GLORIAM DEI, professedly *declare the Glory of GOD*.---Behind the Philosopher stands one of his Scholars, with an Air of close Attention, computing on his Fingers the Distances, the Magnitudes, the Velocities, of the planetary Orbs.—Another, at his Right-hand, attending to the Description of the stupendous System, is struck with Surprise, and impressed with Awe.—A third, with conscious Humiliation in his Countenance, holds a Scroll, inscribed

with a Diagram; expressing the joint Action of the *centrifugal* and *centripetal* Forces: as by the one, the Planets are continually endeavouring to fly off; but by the other, are perpetually drawn towards the Centre of their Motion; SIC GRATIA DEI, *Such is the Operation of divine Grace*: correcting the irregular Impulse of our natural Depravity: determining our Desires to the Centre of Happiness, and directing our Goings in the Circle of Duty—A Youth on the Left, overwhelmed with Veneration for the Almighty Maker, in a Transport of Gratitude, and a Posture of profound Adoration, seems to pour out his very Soul in those emphatical Words; *When I consider thy Heavens, the Work of thy Fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou hast ordained:—*LORD, *what is Man, that thou art mindful of him; and the Son of Man, that thou visitest him?* Pfal. viii. 3, 4.





T O
PAUL ORCHARD,
O F

Stoke-Abbey, in Devonshire, Esq;

Dear SIR,



S your honoured Father was pleased to make choice of me, to answer in your Name at the Font, and to exercise a sort of Guardianship over your spiritual Interests; permit me, by putting these little Treatises into your Hand, to fulfil some Part of that solemn Obligation.

GRATITUDE for many signal Favours, and a *conscientious* Regard to my sacred Engagement, have long ago inspired

VOL. II.

b

my

my Breast with the warmest Wishes, both for *your* true *Dignity*, and real *Happiness*. Nor can I think of a more endearing, or a more effectual Way, of advancing either the one or the other, than to set before you a Sketch of your excellent *Father's Character*. —Illustrious Examples are the most winning Incitements to Virtue : And none can come attended with such particular Recommendations to You, as the Pattern of that worthy Person, from whom, under a gracious GOD, you derive your very Being.

A MOST cordial and reverential *Esteem* for the *Divine Word*, was one of his remarkable Qualities. Those Oracles of Heaven were his principal Delight, and his inseparable Companions. Your Gardens, your solitary Walks, and the Hedges of your Fields, can witness*, with what an unwearied Affiduity He exercised Himself in the Law of the LORD. From hence He fetched his Maxims of Wisdom, and formed his Judgment of Things. The sacred

* Josh. xxiv. 27.

D E D I C A T I O N. vii

Precepts, were the Model of his Tempers, and the Guide of his Life ; while the precious *Promises*, were the Joy of his Heart, and his Portion for ever.

IMPROVING Company was another of his most relishing Pleasures. Few Gentlemen were better furnished, either with Richness of Fancy, or Copiousness of Expression, to bear a shining Part in Conversation. With these Talents, He always endeavoured to give some *useful*, and generally some *religious*, Turn to the Discourse. Nor did he ever reflect, with greater Complacency, on his social Hours, than when they tended to glorify the Eternal Majesty ; and to awaken, in Himself and others, a more lively Spirit of Devotion.

To *project* for the *Good* of *Others*, was his frequent *Study* ; and to *carry* those benevolent Contrivances into *Execution*, his favourite *Employ*. When visited by the young Persons of the Neighbourhood, far from taking an ungraceful Pride to initiate them

viii D E D I C A T I O N.

in Debauchery, or confirm them in a riotous Habit; it was his incessant Aim, by finely-adapted Persuasives, to encourage them in *Industry*, and establish them in a Course of *Sobriety*; to guard them against the Allurements of *Vice*, and animate them with the Principles of *Piety*. A noble Kind of Hospitality this! which will probably transmit it's beneficial Influence, to their earthly Possessions; to their future Families; and even to their everlasting State.

A CONVICTION of human Indigence, and a thorough Persuasion of the Divine All-sufficiency, induced him to be frequent in Prayer. To prostrate himself, in profound Adoration, before that infinitely exalted Being, who dwells in Light inaccessible, was *his Glory*; to implore the Continuance of the Almighty Favour, and the Increase of all Christian Graces, was *his Gain*. In those Moments, no doubt, he remembered You, Sir, with a particular Earnestness; and lodged many an ardent Petition in the Court of Heaven, for his infant Son. Cease not to second them with

D E D I C A T I O N. ix

your own devout Supplications, that they may descend upon your Head, “ in the
“ Fulness of the Blessings of the Gospel of
“ Peace.”

To give their genuine Lustre to all his other Endowments, he was careful to maintain an *humble Mind*. Though his Friends might admire his superior Abilities, or his Acquaintance applaud his exemplary Behaviour, he saw how far he *fell short* of the Mark of his high Calling : saw, and lamented his Defects : saw, and renounced Himself : relying, for final Acceptance, and endless Felicity, on a *better Righteousness* than his own ; even on the transcendently perfect Righteousness, and inconceivably precious Death, of JESUS the Redeemer. This was the Rock of his Hope, and the very Crown of his Rejoicing.

THESE, Sir, are some of the *distinguishing* Characteristics of your deceased Parent. And, as you had the Misfortune to lose so valuable a Relative, before you was capable of forming any Acquaintance with his

b 3 Person ;

x DEDICATION.

Person ; I flatter myself, you will the more attentively observe his Picture. This His *moral Picture* ; designed, not to be set in Gold, or sparkle in Enamel, but to breathe in your Spirit, and to live in all your Conduct.—Which, though it be intirely your own, calculated purely for yourself, may possibly (like the Family-Pieces in your Parlour, that glance an Eye upon as many as enter the Room) make some *pleasing* and *useful* Impression on every Beholder.—May Every one, charmed with the beautiful Image, catch it's Resemblance ; and Each, in his respective Sphere, “ go and do like-
“ wife.”

BUT You, Sir, are peculiarly concerned to copy the amiable Original. As the Order of an indulgent Providence, has made you Heir of the *affluent Circumstances* ; let not a gay and thoughtless Inadvertence, cut you off from the *richer Inheritance*, of these noble Qualifications.—These will be your Security, amidst all the glittering Dangers ; which are inseparable from blooming Years, and an elevated Situation in Life. These
are

DEDICATION. xi

are your Path, your sure and only Path,
to true Greatness, and solid Happiness.
——Tread in these Steps, and you cannot
fail to be the Darling of your Friends, and
the Favourite of Heaven. Tread in these
Steps, and you will give inexpressible Joy
to one of the best of Mothers ; you will
become an extensive Blessing to your Fel-
low-Creatures ; and which, after such most
engaging Motives, is scarce worthy to be
mentioned, you will be the Delight, the
Honour, and the Boast of,

Dear Sir,

Your most affectionate Godfather,

And faithful Humble Servant,

Weston-Favell, near
Northampton,
July 14. 1747.

JAMES HERVEY.



P R E F A C E.

WE have already exercised our Speculations, on the Tombs, and Flowers; surveying Nature, covered with the deepest Horrors, and arrayed in the richest Beauties. Allegory taught many of the Objects, to speak the Language of Virtue; while Imagination lent her Colouring, to give the Lessons an engaging Air. — And this, with a View of imitating that divine Instructor; who commissioned the Lily*, in her silver Suit, to remonstrate in the Ear of unbelieving Reason: Who sent his Disciples (Men ordained to teach the Universe) to learn Maxims of the last Importance, from the most insignificant Birds*, that wander through

* * Matt. vi. 26, 28, 29, 30.

*the Paths of the Air ; from the very meanest Herbs *, that are scattered over the Face of the † Ground.*

Emboldened by the kind Acceptance of the preceding Sketches, I beg Leave to confide in the same Benevolence of Taste, for the Protection and Support of the two remaining Essays ; which exhibit a Prospect of still Life, and grand Operation : which moralize on the most composed, and most magnificent, Appearances

* Matt. vi. 26, 28, 29, 30.

† Celebrated Writers, as *Demosthenes* and *Cicero*, *Thucydides* and *Livy*, are observed to have a Style peculiar to themselves.—Now, whoever considers the Discourses of *Christ*, will find a Style by which he remarkably distinguishes himself, and which may properly be called *HIS OWN*. Majestic, yet familiar ; happily uniting Dignity with Condescension ; it consists, in Teaching his Followers the *sublimest Truths*, by spiritualizing on the most common Occurrences. Which, besides it's being level to the lowest Apprehensions ; and admirably adapted to steal into the most inattentive Heart ; is accompanied with this very singular Advantage, That it turns even the *Sphere of Business* into a *School of Instruction* ; and renders the most ordinary Objects a Set of Monitors, ever soliciting our Regard, because ever present to our Senses.—So that, I believe, it may be said of this *amiable Method*, in which our *LORD* conveyed ; as well as of that *powerful Energy*, which attended his Doctrines ; That *never Man spake like this Man*.—The *Harvest* approaching, He reminds his Disciples of a far more important Harvest, *John* iv. 35. *Matt.* xiii. 39. when immortal Beings shall be reaped from the Grave, and gathered in from all the Quarters of

of

of Things.—In which, Fancy is again suffered to introduce her Imagery ; but only as the Handmaid of Truth : in order to dress her Person, and display her Charms ; to engage the Attention, and win the Love, even of the Gay, and of the Fashionable. Which is more likely to be effected, by forming agreeable Pictures of Nature, and deriving instructive Observations ; than by the laborious Method of long-deduced Arguments, or close-connected Reasonings.—The Contemplation of the Heavens and the Earth, of their admirable Properties, and beneficial Changes, has always afforded the most exalted Gratification to the human Mind. In Compliance with this prevailing Taste, I have drawn my serious Admonitions from the stupendous Theatre, and variegated Scenery, of the Universe. That the Reader may learn his Duty, from his very Pleasure :—may gather Wisdom,

the Earth : when every human Creature shall sustain the Character of valuable Wheat, or despicable Tares ; and accordingly be lodged in Mansions of everlasting Security, or consigned over to the Rage of unquenchable Fire.—In his Charge to Fishermen, when they are commencing Preachers, Matt. iv. 19. He exhorts them, conformably to the Nature of their late Occupation, to use the same Assiduity and Address in winning Souls, as they were wont to exercise in catching the finny Prey.—But, for a further Illustration of this no less useful, than curious Subject, I would refer my Reader to a most valuable Note, in Sir Isaac Newton's Observations on the Prophecies ; p. 148. 4to Edition.

mingled

mingled with Virtue, from the most refined Entertainments, and noblest Delights.

The Evening, drawing her Sables over the World, and gently darkening into Night, is a Season peculiarly proper for sedate Consideration. All Circumstances concur, to hush our Passions, and sooth our Cares; to tempt our Steps abroad, and prompt our Thoughts to serious Reflection.

————— Then is the Time,
For those, whom Wisdom, and whom
Nature charm,
To steal themselves from the degen'rate
Croud,
And soar above this little Scene of Things;
To tread low-thoughted Vice beneath their
Feet;
To sooth the throbbing Passions into Peace;
And woo lone Quiet in her silent Walks*.

The Favour I would solicit for the first of the following Compositions, is, That it may be permitted to attend, in such retired and contemplative Excursions. To attend, if not under the Character of a Friend; at least, in the humble Capacity of a Servant, or a Page:—as a Ser-

* Thomf. Autumn, l. 973. last Edit. 12mo.

vant, to open the Door of Meditation, and remove every Impediment to those best Exercises of the Mind; which blend Advantage with Amusement, and improve, while they delight:—as a Page, to gather up the unstable, fluctuating Train of Fancy, and collect her fickle Powers into a consistent, regular, and useful Habit of Thinking.

The other, conversant among the starry Regions, would lead the Imagination through those beautiful Tracts of unclouded Azure; and point out to the Judgment some of those astonishing Particulars, which so eminently signalize the celestial Worlds. A Prospect this, to which Curiosity attracts our Eyes, and to which Scripture itself often directs our Study. A Prospect, of all others most excellently calculated, to enlarge the Soul, and ennoble it's Conceptions;—to give the highest Apprehensions of the Everlasting GOD, and create Sentiments of becoming Superiority, with relation to all transitory Interests;—in a Word, to furnish Faith with the surest Foundation, for a steady Affiance, and true Magnanimity of Spirit; to afford Piety the strongest Motives, both for a lively Gratitude, and profound Veneration.

While

*While Galilæo lifts his Tube, and discovers
the prodigious Magnitude of those radiant Orbs;
—while Newton measures their amazing Di-
stances, and unites the whole System, in harmo-
nious Order, by the subtle Influences of Attrac-
tion:—I would only, like the Herald before that
illustrious Hebrew*, proclaim at every Turn,
“ Bow the Knee, and adore the Almighty
“ Maker; magnify his eternal Name, and
“ make his Praise, like all his Works, to be
“ glorious.”*

* Gen. xli. 43.



CONTEMPLATIONS

ON THE

N I G H T.

*Night is fair Virtue's immemorial Friend :
The conscious Moon, through ev'ry distant Age,
Has held a Lamp to Wisdom.*

Night-Thoughts, N^o V.



THE CONTENTS.

A *Delightful Evening Walk ; the unmolested Enjoyment of such Pleasures, owing to our late Victory over the Rebels, 1, &c. to 6—The setting Sun, 7—Twilight ; its Usefulness ; serious Consideration, 9—The dewy Coolness ; it's beneficial Influence on Nature ; Returns of Solitude equally useful to Man, 12—Angels our Spectators ; GOD ever present ; comfortable Improvement of this Truth, 15—The Day ended ; the Swiftmess, the Shortness of Time ; the Work to be done while it lasts ; to squander it away the most destructive Extravagance, 19—The profound Silence, 26—Universal Cessation of Business, 28—The Variations of Nature, pleasing and advantageous, 32—Darkness ; the obliging Manner of it's taking place ; wild Beasts of the Desert, and Savages in human Shape, make use of this Opportunity, 35—Darkness renders the least Spark visible ; and, at the same time, steals from our Sight all the lovely Distinctions of Things, 39—Sleep ; it's cheering Nature ; the Gift of Heaven ; the fine*

xxii The CONTENTS.

Preparatives for it's Approach; the Kindness of Providence in guarding our Slumbers, 43—Dreams; their unaccountable Oddness; many Peoples waking Thoughts no less chimerical 49—A very singular, and very happy Circumstance, attending Sleep and Dreams, 53—Ghosts; our unreasonable Timorousness on this fanciful Occasion; the true Object of Fear; the Reality and Design of Apparitions, deduced from a Passage in Job, 55—The Owl; it's gloomy Disposition; the Unholy incapable of relishing the Delights of Heaven, 63—Owl screaming, supposed to be a Token of Death; the many real Presages of this great Change; due Preparation pointed out, and pressed, 66—The Nightingale; her charming Song; entertains the Lovers of Retirement; how to have a sweeter Melody in our own Breasts, 70—The very different Circumstances of Mankind, particularly of the Gay, and the Afflicted; Address to the Devotees of Mirth and Sensuality, 72—The Glow-worm, and Ignis fatuus; the Pleasures of the World, and Powers of unenlightened Reason, 77—A Comet; imagined to be the Fore-runner of Judgments; Licentiousness abounding in a Nation, a much more formidable Omen; the Distemper among the Cattle, 80—Northern Lights; the Panic they occasion; the general Conflagration, 84—The Moon rising;

The CONTENTS. xxxiii

ing ; brightens as she advances ; such should be our moral Conduct, 88—Moon opens a majestic Scene ; how worthy our Admiration, 90—Moon, a most serviceable Appendage to our Globe, 91—Moon shines with derivative Light ; Christians receive their All from their Saviour, 94—Moon always varying ; the Things of this World liable to perpetual Vicissitudes ; our own Righteousness unequal and imperfect, our Redeemer's complete, and always the same, 96—Moon under an Eclipse ; gazed at by Multitudes ; the Faults of eminent Persons seldom escape Observation, 103—Moon reflected by the Ocean ; the Virtues of Persons, in distinguished Stations, influential on others, 105—Moon actuates the Sea ; the everlasting Joys of Heaven attract and refine the Affections, 106—Prayer, a reasonable Service ; Praise, a delightful Duty ; with devout Recollections proper for the Night, 107.



CONTEMPLATIONS

ON THE

NIGHT.

THE Business of the Day dispatched, and the sultry Heats abated, invited me to the Recreation of a *Walk*: A Walk, in one of the *finest Recesses* of the Country; and in one of the most *pleasant Evenings*, which the Summer-Season produced.

THE Limes and Elms, uniting their Branches over my Head, formed a *verdant Canopy*, and cast a most refreshing Shade. Under my Feet lay a *Carpet* of Nature's

VOL. II.

B

Velvet;

2 CONTEMPLATIONS

Velvet; Grass intermingled with Moss, and embroidered with Flowers. Jessamines, in Conjunction with Woodbuds, twined around the Trees; displaying their *artless Beauties* to the Eye, and diffusing their *delicious Sweets* through the Air. On either Side, the Boughs, rounded into a Set of regular Arches, opened a View into the *distant Fields*, and presented me with a Prospect of the *bending Skies*. The little Birds, all joyous and grateful for the Favours of the Light, were paying their Acknowledgements in a *Tribute of Harmony*, and soothing themselves to Rest with Songs. While a French-Horn, from a neighbouring Seat, sent its melodious Accents, softened by the Length of their Passage, to complete the *Concert of the Grove*.

ROVING in this agreeable Manner, my Thoughts were exercised on a Subject, more delightful than the Season, or the Scene. I mean, our late *signal Victory*, over the united Forces of *intestine Treason*, and *foreign Invasion*. A Victory, which pours Joy through the present Age, and will transmit it's Influence to Generations yet unborn.---- Are not all the Blessings, which can endear Society, or render Life itself desirable, centred

tred in our present *happy Constitution*, and *auspicious Government*? And were they not all struck at, by that impious and horrid Blow, meditated at *Rome*; levelled by *France*; and seconded by factious *Spirits* at *Home*? Who then can be sufficiently thankful, for the gracious Interposition of Providence; which has not only averted the impending Ruin, but turned it, with aggravated Confusion, on the Authors of our Troubles?

METHINKS, every Thing *valuable*, which I possess; every Thing *charming*, which I behold; conspire to enhance this ever-memorable Event. To this it is owing, that I can ramble unmolested along the Vale of *private Life*, and taste all the innocent Satisfaction of a *contemplative Retirement*.--- Had Rebellion * succeeded in her detestable Designs; instead of walking with *Security* and *Complacence* in these flowery Paths, I might have met the *Assassin* with his *Dagger*: or have been obliged to provide for my Safety, by abandoning my Habitation.---

* Referring to the Rebellion, set on Foot in the Year 1745.— which, for several Months, made a very alarming Progress in the North---but was happily extinguished by the glorious and decisive Victory at *Culloden*.

4 C O N T E M P L A T I O N S

Farewel then, ye fragrant Shades ; Seats of Meditation, and calm Repose ! I should have been driven from your loved *Retreats*, to make Way for some *insulting Victor*.---- Farewel then, ye pleasing Toils, and wholesome Amusements of my rural Hours ! I should no more have reared the tender *Flower* to the Sun ; no more have taught the *Espalier* to expand her Boughs ; nor have fetched, any longer, from my *Kitchen-Garden*, the purest Supplies of Health.

HAD Rebellion succeeded in her detestable Designs ; instead of being regaled with the *Musick* of the *Woods*, I might have been alarmed with the Sound of the Trumpet, and all the Thunder of War. Instead of being entertained with this *beautiful Landscape*, I might have beheld our Houses ransacked, and our Villages plundered ; I might have beheld our fenced Cities encompassed with Armies, and our fruitful Fields “ cloathed with Desolation ;” or have been shocked with the still more frightful Images, of “ Garments rolled in Blood,” and of a Russian’s Blade reeking from a Brother’s Heart. Instead of *Peace*, with her chearing Olives, sheltering our Abodes ; instead of *Justice*, with her impartial Scale, securing
our

our Goods; *Persecution* had brandished her Sword, and *Slavery* clanked her Chains.

NOR are these Miseries *imaginary* only, or the Creatures of a groundless Panic. There are, in a neighbouring Kingdom, who very lately *experienced* them in all their Rigour*. And, if the *malignant* Spirit of *Popery*, had forced itself into our Church; if an *abjured Pretender*, had cut his Way to our Throne; We could have no Reason to expect a Mitigation of their Severity, on our Behalf.---- But, supposing the *tender Mercies* of a bigotted Usurper, to have been somewhat less *cruel*; yet where, alas! would have been the *Encouragement*, to cultivate our little Portion; or what *Pleasure* could arise, from an improved Spot; if both the one and the other lay, every Moment, at the Mercy of *lawless Power*? This imbittering Circumstance would spoil their Relish; and by rendering them a *precarious*, would render them a *joyless* Acquisition.---In vain, might the *Vine* spread her purple Clusters; in vain, be la-

* See a Pamphlet intituled, *Popery always the same*. --- Which contains a Narrative of the *Persecutions*, and severe Hardships, lately suffered by the *Protestants*, in the Southern Parts of *France*; and closes with a most *seasonable, alarming, and spirited Address* to the Inhabitants of *Great Britain*. Printed 1746. Price 8 d.

6 CONTEMPLATIONS

vish of her generous Juices ; if *Tyranny*, like a ravenous Harpy, should be always hovering over the Bowl, and ready to snatch it from the Lip of *Industry*.

LIBERTY, that dearest of Names ; and *Property*, that best of Charters ; give an additional, an inexpressible Charm, to every delightful Object.---See, how the declining Sun has beautified the *western Clouds* ; has arrayed them in Crimson, and skirted them with Gold. Such a Refinement of our *domestic Bliss*, is Property ; such an Improvement of our *public Privileges*, is Liberty.---When the Lamp of Day shall intirely withdraw his Beams, there will still remain the same Collection of floating Vapours ; but O ! how changed, how gloomy ! The *Carnation* blushes no more ; the golden Edgings are gone ; and all the *lovely Tinges* are lost, in a *leaden-coloured leuring Sadness*. Such would be the Aspect, of all these Scenes of Beauty ; all these Abodes of Pleasure ; if exposed continually to the Caprice of *arbitrary Sway*, or held in a State of abject and *cringing Dependence*.

THE Light of Heaven has almost finished his daily Race, and hastens to the Goal.

He

He descends lower and lower ; till his Chariot-wheels seem to hover on the utmost Verge of Day. And, what is somewhat remarkable, his *Orb*, upon the Point of setting, grows *broader* : The *Shadows*, just before they are lost in undistinguished Darkness, are surprisngly *lengthened*.*----Like *Blessings*, little prized, while *possessed* : but highly esteemed, the very Instant they are *preparing* for their *Flight* ; bitterly regretted, when once they are gone, and to be seen no more.

THE radiant Globe is, now, half-immersed beneath the dusky Earth. He is taking his Leave of our Hemisphere, and gilds the Plains with a languid Lustre.----But, could I view the *Sea*, at this Juncture, it would yield a most amusing and curious Spectacle. The Rays, striking horizontally on the liquid Element, give it the Appearance of floating Glass : or, reflected in many a different Direction, form a beautiful Multiplicity of Colours.----A *Stranger*, as he walks along the sandy Beach ; and, lost in pensive Attention, listens to the Murmurings of the restless Flood ; is agreeably alarmed

* *Majoresque cadunt altis de Montibus Umbræ.* VIRG.

8 CONTEMPLATIONS

by the *gay Decorations* of the Surface. With Entertainment, and with Wonder, he sees the curling Waves, here glistering with White, there glowing with Purple; in one Place, wearing an azure Tincture; in another, glancing a Cast of undulating Green; in the Whole, exhibiting a Piece of *fluid Scenery*, that may vie with yonder pensil Tapestries, though wrought in the Loom, and tinged with the Dyes of Heaven.

BUT, while I am transported by Fancy to the Shores of the Ocean, the great Luminary is sunk beneath the Horizon, and totally disappears. The whole Face of the Ground is overspread with Shades; or with, what one of the finest Painters of Nature calls, a *dun Obscurity*. Only a few very superior Eminencies are tipt with streaming Silver. The Tops of Groves, and lofty Towers, catch the *last Smiles* of Day*; are still irradiated by the departing Beams.---- But oh! how transient is the Distinction! how momentary the Gift! Like all the

* See this remarkable Appearance delicately described, and wrought into a Comparison, which, in my Opinion, is one of the most just, beautiful, and noble Pieces of Imagery, to be found in modern Poetry.

Night-Thoughts, N^o II. p. 42. 4to Edit.

Blessings,

Blessings, which Mortals enjoy below, it is *gone*, almost as soon as *granted*. See! how languishingly it trembles on the leafy Spire; and glimmers, with a dying Faintness, on the Mountain's Brow. The little Vivacity, that remains, decays every Moment. It can no longer hold it's Station. While I speak, it expires; and resigns the World to the gradual Approaches of Night.

-----Now Twilight grey
Has in her sober Liv'ry all Things clad*.

EVERY Object, a little while ago, glared with Light; but now, All appears under a more qualified Lustre. The Animals harmonize with the insensible Creation; and what was *gay* in those, as well as *glittering* in this, gives place to an universal *Gravity*. In the *Meadows*, all was jocund and sportive: but now the gamesome Lambs, are grown weary of their Frolicks; and the tired Shepherd, has imposed Silence on his Pipe. In the *Branches*, all was Sprightliness and Song: but now the lively Green, is wrapt in the descending Glooms; and no tuneful Airs are heard, but only the plaintive Stock-dove, cooing mournfully through the Grove.----

* MILT. *Par. Lost*, B. iv. l. 598.

Should

10 CONTEMPLATIONS

Should I now be vain and trifling, the Heavens and the Earth would rebuke my unseasonable Levity. Therefore, be these Moments devoted to Thoughts, *sedate*, as the closing Day; *solemn*, as the Face of Things. And, indeed, however my social Hours are enlivened with *innocent Pleasantry*; let every Evening, in her sable Habit, toll the Bell to *serious Consideration*. Nothing can be more proper, for a Creature that borders upon Eternity, and is hasting continually to his final Audit; than daily to slip away from the Circle of Amusements, and frequently to relinquish the Hurry of Business, in order to consider and adjust “the Things that belong to his Peace.”

SINCE the Sun is departed, from whence can it proceed, that I am not involved in *pitchy Darknefs*? Whence, these Remainers of *diminished Brightness*? which, though scarcely forming a Refulgence, yet smoothe the rugged Brow of Night. I see not the shining Orb, and yet am cheered with a Portion of his softened Splendors.----Does he remember Us, in his Progress through other Climes; and send a *Detachment* of his Rays, to *escort* Us, in our further Motions; or *cover* (if I may use the military Term)

Term) our *Retreat*, from the Scene of Action? Has He bequeathed Us a Dividend of his Beams, sufficient to render our Circumstances easy, and our Situation agreeable? till Sleep pours it's soft Oppression on the Organs of Sense; till Sleep suspends all the Operations of our Hands; and intirely supersedes any more Occasion for the Light.

No: it is ill-judged and unreasonable, to ascribe this beneficent Conduct to the *Sun*. Not unto *Him*; not unto *Him*; but unto his *Almighty Maker* We are obliged, for this noble Present, this valuable Legacy. The gracious Author of our Being, has so disposed the Collection of circumambient Air, as to make it productive of this fine and beneficial Effect. The Sun-beams, falling on the higher Parts of the aerial Fluid, instead of passing on in strait Lines, are bent inward, and inflected to our Sight. Their natural Course is over-ruled, and they are bidden to wheel about; on purpose, to favour Us with a welcome and salutary Visit.----By which means, the Blessing of Light, and the Season of Business, are considerably prolonged. And, what is a very endearing Circumstance, prolonged most considerably; when the vehement Heats of
Summer,

12 CONTEMPLATIONS

Summer, incline the *Student* to postpone his Walk, till the temperate Evening prevails; when the important Labours of the Harvest, call the *Husbandman* abroad before the Day is fully risen.

AFTER all the Ardors of the sultry Day, how reviving is this *Coolness*!----This gives new *Verdure* to the fading Plants; new *Vivacity* to the withering Flowers; and a more exquisite *Fragrancy* to their mingled Scents.---By this, the *Air* also receives a new Force, and is qualified to exert itself with greater Activity: to brace our Limbs; to heave our Lungs; and co-operate, with a brisker Impulse, in perpetuating the Circulation of our Blood.---This I might call the grand *Alem-bic* of *Nature*; which distils her most sovereign *Cordial*, the refreshing *Dews*. *Incessant Heat*, would destroy the pearly Drops; or oblige them to evaporate, in imperceptible Exhalations. *Turbulent Winds*, or even the gentler Motions of *Aurora's Fan*, would dissipate the rising Vapours, and not suffer them to come to a Coalition. But, favoured by the Stillness; and condensed by the Coolness of the Night; they form that *finely-tempered Humidity*, which cheers the vegetable World, as Sleep exhilarates the animal.

SUCH

SUCH are the Advantages of *Solitude*. The World is a troubled Ocean; and who can erect stable Purposes, on it's fluctuating Waves? The World is a School of Wrong; and who does not feel Himself warping, to it's pernicious Influences *? On this *Sea of Glass* †, how insensibly we *slide* from our *Stedfastness*! Some sacred *Truth*, which was struck in lively Characters on our Souls, is obscured, if not obliterated. Some *noble Resolution*, which Heaven had wrought in our Breasts, is shaken, if not overthrown. Some *inticing Vanity*, which we had solemnly renounced, again practises it's Charms, and again captivates our Affections. How often has an unwary Glance, kindled a Fever of irregular Desire in our Hearts? How often has a Word of Applause, dropt luscious Poison into our Ears; or some disrespectful Expression, raised a Gust of Passion in our Bosoms? Our Innocence, is of so *tender a Constitution*, that it suffers in the promiscuous Croud; our Purity, of so *delicate a Complexion*, that it scarce touches on

* *Nunquam a turba mores, quos extuli, refero. Aliquid, ex eo quod composui, turbatur: aliquid, ex his quæ fugavi, redit. Inimica est multorum conversatio.* Senec.

† Rev. xv. 2.

14 CONTEMPLATIONS

the World, without contracting a Stain.
We see, we hear, with *Peril*.

BUT here *Safety* dwells. Every meddling and intrusive Avocation is secluded. Silence holds the Door against the Strife of Tongues, and all the Impertinencies of idle Conversation. The busy Swarm of vain Images, and cajoling Temptations; that beset Us, with a buzzing Importunity, amidst the Gaieties of Life; are chased by these thickening Shades.---Here I may, without Disturbance, commune with my own Heart; and learn that *best* of *Sciences*, to *know myself*. Here the Soul may rally her dissipated Powers, and Grace recover it's native Energy.---This is the Opportunity, to rectify the evil Impressions, and expel the Contagion, of corrupting Examples. This is the Place, where I may, with Advantage, apply myself to subdue the *Rebel within*; and be Master, not of a *Sceptre*, but of *myself*.---Throng then, ye Ambitious, the *Levees* of the Powerful; I will be punctual in *my Affignation* with Solitude. To a Mind intent upon it's own Improvement, Solitude has Charms incomparably more engaging, than the *Entertainments* presented in the
Theatre;

Theatre ; or the *Honours* conferred in the *Drawing-Room*.

I SAID Solitude.---But am I then *alone*?---
'Tis true, my Acquaintance are at a Distance. I have stole away from Company, and am remote from all *human* Observation.---But that is an alarming Thought,

Millions of spiritual Creatures *walk the Earth*,
Unseen, *both when we wake, and when we sleep* *.

PERHAPS, there may be Numbers of those *invisible Beings*, patrolling this same Retreat ; and joining with me, in contemplating the Creator's Works. Perhaps, those *ministring Spirits*, who rejoice at the Conversion of a Sinner, and hold up the Goings of the Righteous, may follow Us to the lonely Recess ; and, even in our most *solitary* Moments, be our constant *Attendants*.----What a pleasing Awe is awakened, by such a Reflection ! How *venerable* it renders my *retired* Walks ! I am struck with Reverence, as under the Roof of some *sacred Edifice* ; or in the *Presence-Chamber* of some mighty Monarch.----

* MILT. *Par. Lost*, B. iv. l. 677.

16 CONTEMPLATIONS

O! may I never bring any Pride of Imagination, nor indulge the least dissolute Affection; where such refined and exalted Inteligencies exercise their Watch!

'Tis *possible*, that I am encompassed with such a Cloud of Witnesses; but it is *certain*, that God, the *infinite* and *eternal* God, is ever with me. The great JEHOVAH, before whom all the Angelic Armies bow their Heads, and veil their Faces, surrounds me; supports me; pervades me. "In HIM I live, move, and have my Being." The whole World is his *august Temple*; and, in the most *sequestered Corner*, I appear before his adorable Majesty, no less than when I worship in his House, or kneel at his Altar. In every Place, therefore, let me pay him the Homage of a Heart, cleansed from Idols, and devoted to his Service. In every Circumstance, let me feel no *Ambition*, but to *please* Him; nor covet any *Happiness*, but to *enjoy* Him.

How sublime is the Description, and how striking the Sentiment, in that noble Passage of the Psalms! *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy Presence? If I climb up into the Heights of Heaven,*

ven, *Thou art there* inthroned in Light. *If I go down to the Depths of the Grave, Thou art there also* in thy Pavilion of Darknes. *If I retire to the remotest Eastern Climes, where the Morning first takes Wing: if, swifter than the darting Ray, I pass to the opposite Regions of the West, and remain in the uttermost Parts of the Sea**: shall I, in *that* distant Situation, be beyond thy Reach; or, by *this* sudden Transition, escape thy Notice? So far from it; that could I, with one Glance of Thought, transport myself beyond all the Bounds of Creation; I should still be incircled with the *Immensity* of thy *Essence*; or rather, still be inclosed in the *Hollow* of thy *Hand*. Important and delightful Truth! let it be interwoven with every Thought! and become one with the very Consciousness of my Existence! that I may continually *walk with GOD*, and conduct myself, in every Step of my Behaviour, “ as *seeing HIM that is invisible.*”

* Psal. cxxxix. 7, 8, 9. There is, I think, an additional Strength and Beauty in the Thought; if, with the learned Mr. *Mudge*, we suppose an *Antithesis* between the Two Clauses of this last Verse, as there evidently is between those of the preceding; and that they express, in a poetical Stile, the Extremities of the *East* and the *West*.

18 CONTEMPLATIONS

THEY are the happy Persons; *Felicity*, true *Felicity*, is *all their own*; who live under an habitual Sense of God's Omnipresence, and a sweet Persuasion of his special Love. If Dangers threaten, their impregnable Defence is at Hand; nothing can be so near to terrify, as their Almighty Guardian to secure them.---To These, the Hours can never be *tedious*; and it is impossible, for them, to be *alone*. Do they step aside from the *Occupations* of animal Life? A more exalted Set of Employments engage their Attention. They address themselves, in all the *various Acts* of Devotion, to their heavenly Father; *who now sees in secret, and will hereafter reward them openly*. They spread all their Wants, before his indulgent Eye; and disburden all their Sorrows, into his compassionate Bosom.---Do they withdraw from *human Society*? They find themselves under the more immediate Regards of their Maker. If they resign the Satisfactions of social Intercourse; it is to cultivate a Correspondence with the condescending DEITY, and taste the Pleasures of *Divine Friendship*.---What is such a *State*, but the very Suburbs of Heaven? What is such a *Conduct*, but an Antepast of eternal Blessedness?

Now,

Now, my Soul, the *Day is ended*. The Hours are all fled: They are fled to the supreme Judge, and have given in their Evidence. An Evidence, registred in Heaven! and to be produced, at the great Audit.---- Happy *They!* whose Improvement has kept Pace with the fleeting Minutes. Who have seized them, as they advanced; and engaged them in the *Pursuit of Wisdom*, or the *Service of Virtue*.

How is the Day gone, almost as soon as it dawned!---The silent Moments slip away *insensibly*. No Thief steals more unperceived from the pillaged House. Where-ever we are, however employed, Time pursues his incessant Course. Though *we* are listless and dilatory; the *great Measurer* of our *Days* presses on; still presses on, in his unwearied Career; and whirls our Weeks, and Months, and Years away.---Is it not then surprisingly strange, to hear People complain of the *Tediousness* of their Time, and how *heavy* it hangs upon their Hands? To see them contriving a Variety of amusing Artifices, to accelerate it's Flight, and get rid of it's Burden?---Ah! thoughtless Mortals! Why need you urge the headlong Torrent? Your Days are *swifter* than a *Post*; which, carry-

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20 CONTEMPLATIONS

ing Dispatches of the last Importance, with unremitted Speed scours the Road. They pass away like the *nimble Ships*; which have the Wind in their Wings, and skim along the watry Plain. They hasten to their destined Period, with the *Rapidity* of an *Eagle*; which leaves the stormy Blast behind Her, while She cleaves the Air, and darts upon her Prey*.

AND now it is gone, how *short* it appears! When my fond Eye beheld it in *Perspective*, it seemed a very considerable Space. Minutes, crouded upon Minutes; and Hours, ranged behind Hours; exhibited an extensive Plan, and flattered me with a long Progression of Pleasures. But, upon a *retrospective* View, how wonderfully is the Scene altered! The Landscape, large and spacious, which a *warm Fancy* drew; brought

* *Job* ix. 25, 26. By these Three very expressive Images, the inspired Poet represents the *unintermitted* and *rapid* Flight of *Time*. The Passage is illustrated with great Judgment, and equal Delicacy, in Dr. Grey's most ingenious Abridgment of *Schultens*.—*Quæ tribus in elementis velocissima, hic admirabili cum emphasi congeruntur. In terris, nil perniciousius cursore, & quidem læti quid ferente. Rapidius tamen adhuc undas, non secant, sed supervolant, navigiola papyra contexta. Omnium rapidissime aerem grandibus alis permetitur aquila, præcipiti lapsu ruens in prædam.*

to

to the Test of *cool Experience*, shrinks into a Span. Just as the Shores vanish, and Mountains dwindle to a Spot; when the Sailor, furrounded by Skies and Ocean, throws his last Look on his native Land.---How clearly do I now discover the Cheat! May it never impose, upon my unwary Imagination, again! I find, there is nothing abiding on this Side Eternity. A *long Duration*, in a State of *finite Existence*, is *mere Illusion*.

PERHAPS, the *Healthy*, and the *Gay*, may not readily credit the serious Truth; especially from a young Pen, and new to it's Employ. Let us then refer ourselves to the Decision of the *Antient*. Ask some venerable old Person, that is just marching off the mortal Stage; *How many have been the Days of the Years of thy Life**? It was a Monarch's Question; and therefore can want no Recommendation, to the fashionable World.---Observe, how he shakes his hoary Locks, and from a deep-felt Conviction replies; "*Fourscore Years* have finished " their Rounds, to furrow these Cheeks, " and cloathe this Head in Snow. Such a

* Gen. xlvii. 8.

22 CONTEMPLATIONS

“ Term may seem long and large, to in-
 “ confiderate Youth. But Oh ! how short,
 “ how scanty, to One that has made the
 “ Experiment ! *Short* as a *Gleam* of transient
 “ Sunshine ; *scanty*, ‘ as the *Shadow* that de-
 “ parteth.’ Methinks, it was but Yesterday,
 “ that I exchanged my childish Sports, for
 “ manly Exercifes ; and now, I am resign-
 “ ing them both, for the Sleep of Death.
 “ As soon as we are *born*, we begin to draw
 “ to our *End* ; and how small is the Interval,
 “ between the Cradle and the Tomb !”----
 O ! may we believe this Testimony of ma-
 ture Age ! May every Evening bring it, with
 clearer Evidence, to our Minds ! And may
 we form fuch an Estimate of the *little Pit-*
tance, while it is upon the *advancing* Hand ;
 as we fhall certainly make, when the Sands
 are all *run down* !

LET me add one Reflection on the *Work*
 to be *done*, while this Shuttle is flying through
 the Loom*. A Work of no fmall Diffi-
 culty, and yet of the utmoft Confequence,
 ---Hast Thou not feen, haft Thou not
 heard of, the *Excellent* of the *Earth* ; who
 were living Images of their Maker ? His
Divine Likenefs was transfused into their

* My Days are fwifter than a Weaver’s Shuttle. *Job*
 vii. 6.

Hearts,

Hearts, and beamed forth in all their Conduct. Beamed forth in the *Meekness* of *Wisdom*, and *Purity* of *Affection*; in all the *tender Offices* of Love, and all the *noble Efforts* of Zeal. To be stamp'd with the same beautiful Signature, and to be Followers of them, as they were of CHRIST; *this, this* is thy *Business*. On the Accomplishment of this, thy eternal All depends. And, will an Affair of such unspeakable Weight, admit of a Moment's Delay, or consist with the least Remissness?---Especially, since much of thy appointed Time is already elapsed; and the Remainder is *all Uncertainty*, save only that it is in the very Act to fly.---Or suppose, thou hadst made a *Covenant* with the Grave, and wast assured of reaching the Age of *Methuselah*; how soon would even *such a Lease* expire!----Extend it, if you please, still farther; and let it be *co-existent* with *Nature* itself: Yet, how speedily will the Consummation of all Things commence! For, yet a very little while, and the commissioned Archangel lifts up his Hand to Heaven, and swears by the Almighty Name, *That Time shall be no longer* *. Then, *abused*

* This alludes to the Beginning of *Revelations* the xth; which, abstracted from it's spiritual Meaning, and considered only as a stately *Piece* of *Machinery*, well

24 CONTEMPLATIONS

Opportunities, will never return ; and *new* Opportunities, will never more be offered. Then, should negligent Mortals wish, ever so passionately, for a few Hours ;----a *few Moments* only ;----to be thrown back from

deserves our Attention ; and, I will venture to say, has not it's *Superior*, perhaps not it's *Equal*, in any of the most celebrated Masters of *Greece* and *Rome*.—All that is gloomy or beautiful in the Atmosphere, all that is striking or magnificent in every Element, is taken in to heighten the Idea. Yet nothing is disproportionate ; but an uniform Air of ineffable Majesty greatens, exalts, ennobles the Whole.—Be pleased to observe the *Aspect* of this august Personage. All the Brightness of the Sun, shines in his Countenance ; and all the Rage of the Fire, burns in his Feet.—See his *Apparel*. The Clouds compose his Robe, and the Drapery of the Sky floats upon his Shoulders. The Rainbow forms his Diadem ; and that which “ com-
“ passeth the Heaven with a glorious Circle,” is the Ornament of his Head.—Behold his *Attitude*. One Foot stands on the Ocean, and the other rests on the Land. The wide extended Earth, and the World of Waters, serve as Pedestals for those mighty Columns.—Consider the *Action*. His Hand is lifted up to the Height of the Stars. He speaks ; and the Regions of the Firmament echo with the mighty Accents, as the midnight Desert resounds with the Lion's Roar. The Artillery of the Skies is discharged at the Signal ; a Peal of sevenfold Thunder spreads the Alarm ; and prepares the World to receive his Orders.—To finish all ; and give the highest Grandeur, as well as the utmost Solemnity, to the Representation ; hear the *Decree* that issues from his Mouth. He *swears by HIM that liveth for ever and ever*. In whatever Manner, so majestic a Person, had expressed Himself ; He could not fail of commanding universal Attention. But when He confirms his Speech, by a most fa-

the

the opening Eternity; *Thousands of Worlds* would not be able to procure the Grant.

SHALL I, now, be industrious to *shorten*, what is no longer than a *Span*; or to *quicken* the Pace of what is ever on the *Wing*? Shall I squander away what is *unutterably important*, while it lasts; and, when once departed, is *altogether irrevocable*? O! my Soul, forbear the Folly; forbear the desperate Extravagance. Wilt Thou chide as a *Loiterer*, the Arrow that *boundeth* from the String; or sweep away *Diamonds*, as the Refuse of thy House?—Throw Time away! Astonishing, ruinous, irreparable Profuseness! Throw Empires away, and be blameless. But O! be parsimonious of thy Days; husband thy precious Hours. They go connected, indissolubly connected, with Heaven

cred and inviolable Oath; we are not only wrapt in silent Suspense, but overwhelmed with the profoundest Awe.—He swears, *That Time shall be no longer*. Was ever Voice so full of Terror; so big with Wonder? It proclaims, not the Fall of Empires, but the final Period of Things. It strikes off the Wheels of Nature; bids Ages and Generations cease to roll; and, with one potent Word, consigns a whole World over to Dissolution.—This is *one*, among a *Multitude* of very sublime and *masterly Strokes*, to be found in that too much neglected Book—the BIBLE.

26 CONTEMPLATIONS

or Hell*. *Improved*, they are a sure Pledge of everlasting Glory; *wasted*, they are a sad Preface to never-ending Confusion and Anguish.

WHAT a *profound Silence* has composed the World! So profound is the Silence, that my very Breath seems a Noise! the Ticking of my Watch is distinctly heard; if I do but stir, it creates a Disturbance.---There is, now, none of that confused Din, from the tumultuous City: No Voice of jovial Rustics, from the neighbouring Meadow: No chirping Melody, from the shady Thicket.---Every Lip is sealed: Not the least Whisper, invades the Air; nor the least Motion, rustles among the Boughs. *Echo* herself sleeps unmolested. The expanded Ear, though all Attention, catches no

* I remember to have seen, upon a Sun-dial in a Physician's Garden at *Northampton*, the following INSCRIPTION; which, I think, is the most *proper Motto* for the Instrument, that measures our Time; and the most *striking Admonition*, which can possibly be given, to every Eye that glances upon it;—*Ab hoc Momento pendet Æternitas*.—The weighty Sense of which, I know not how to express in *English*, more happily than in those Words of Dr. *Watts*,

Good God! on what a *slender Thread*
[Or, on what a *Moment* of Time]
Hang everlasting Things!

Sound,

Sound, but the *liquid Lapse* of a murmuring Stream.

All Things are hush'd, as Nature's Self lay dead.

IF, in the midst of this *deep* and universal *Composure*, *Ten thousand* bellowing *Thunders* should burst over my Head; and rend the Skies, with their united *Vollies*: O! how should I bear so *unexpected* a *Shock*? It would stun my *Senses*, and confound my *Thoughts*. I should shudder in every *Limb*; and, perhaps, sink to the Earth with *Terror*.---Consider then, O *Mortals*! consider, what a much more *prodigious* and *amazing* Call will, ere long, alarm your sleeping *Bones*. When the *Tenants* of the *Tomb* have slumbered, in the most undisturbed *Repose*, for a *Multitude* of *Ages*; what an inconceivable *Consternation* must the *Shout* of the *Archangel*, and the *Trump* of *God*, occasion! Will it not wound the *Ear* of the *Ungodly*; and affright, even to *Distraction*, the *impenitent Sinner*? The stupendous *Peal* will sound through the *Vast* of *Heaven*; will shake the *Foundations* of *Nature*; and pierce even the deepest *Recesses* of the *Grave*. And how---O! how will the *Prisoners* of *Divine Justice*, be able to endure that tremendous *Summons*, to a more tremendous

28 CONTEMPLATIONS

mendous *Tribunal*? ---- Do Thou, my Soul, listen to the *still Voice* of the Gospel. Attend, in this thy Day, to the 'gracious Invitations of thy Saviour. Then, shall that great midnight Cry lose it's *Horror*, and be *Music* to thy Ears. It shall be welcome to thy reviving Clay, as the Tidings of Liberty, to the Dungeon Captive; as the Year of Jubilee, to the harassed *Slave*. This, this shall be it's charming Import, "*Awake, and sing, ye that dwell in Dust**."

WHAT a general *Cessation* of *Affairs*, has this dusky Hour introduced! A little while ago, all was Hurry, Hurry. Life and Activity exerted themselves in a thousand busy Forms. The City swarmed, with passing and repassing Multitudes. All the Country, was Sweat and Dust. The Air floated in perpetual Agitation, by the flitting Birds, and humming Bees. *Art* sat prying with her piercing Eyes; while *Industry* plied her restless Hands. ---But see; how all this fervent, and impetuous Bustle, is fled with the setting Sun. The Beasts are flunk, to their grassy Couch; and the winged People are retired, to their downy Nests. The Hammer has

* Isa. xxvi. 1. 9.

resigned

resigned it's sounding Task, and the File ceases to repeat it's flying Touches. Shut is the well-frequented Shop, and it's Threshold no longer worn by the Feet of numerous Customers. The Village-Swain lies drowned in Slumbers; and even his trusty Dog, who, for a considerable Time, stood Centry at the Door, is extended at his Ease, and snores with his Master.----In every Place, *Toil* reclines her Head, and *Application* folds her Arms. All Interests seem to be forgot; all Pursuits are suspended; all Employment is sunk away; sunk away, like the fluttering Myriads, that lately sported in the Sun's departing Rays. 'Tis like the Sabbath of universal Nature; or as though the Pulse of Life stood still.

THUS will it be, with our infinitely momentous Concerns; when once *the Shadows of the Evening*, that long Evening which follows the Footsteps of Death, *are stretched over Us*. The Dead cannot seek unto God; the Living, the Living alone, are possessed of this inestimable Opportunity*. "There

* ——— *Nunc, nunc properandus, & acri
Fingendus sine fine rota.*—PERS.

Behold! *now* is the accepted Time. Behold! *now* is the Day of Salvation. 2 Cor. vi. 2.

30 CONTEMPLATIONS

“ is no Work or Device, no Repentance or
 “ Amendment, in the Grave *, whither
 “ We are All hasting.” When once that
closing Scene is advanced, We shall have no
 other Part to act on this *earthly Theatre*.
 Then, the Sluggard, who has slumbered
 away Life in a criminal Inactivity, must lie
 down in hopeless Distress, and everlasting
 Sorrow. Then, that awful Doom will take
 place, “ He that is *holy*, let Him be holy
 “ still ; and he that is *filthy*, let Him be fil-
 “ thy for ever.”

* They, who are gone down to the Grave, are re-
 presented (*Isai. xxxviii. 11.*) by the Phrase, יושבי
 חרל---rendered by *Vitranga*, *Those that inhabit the Land*
of Intermiſſion or Ceſſation.--Which prevents all Appearance
 of *Tautology* in the Sentence ; and is, I think, a valuable
Improvement of the Translation : as it conveys an Idea,
 not only diſtinct from the preceding, but of a very poe-
 tical and very afflicting Nature ; ſuch as was perfectly
 natural for the Royal Singer, and Royal Sufferer, to dwell
 upon, in his deſponding Moments.---Thus interpreted,
 the Senſe will run ; “ *I ſhall ſee Man no more ; I ſhall be*
 “ *cut off from the chearful Ways of Men, and all the*
 “ *Sweets of human Society.* And, what is a farther
 “ *Aggravation* of the threatened Stroke, *I ſhall*, by it's
 “ *taking Place, be numbered with Thoſe, that inhabit the*
 “ *Land of intire Ceſſation* and Inactivity : Where there
 “ *will be no more Poſſibility, of contributing to the*
 “ *Happineſs of my Kingdom ; no more Opportunity, of*
 “ *advancing my Creator's Glory ; or of making my own*
 “ *final Salvation ſure.*”---A Sentiment like *this*, is grand,
 and important ; full of Piety, and full of Benevolence ;
 removes all Suſpicion of unbecoming *Puſillanimity*, and
 does the higheſt *Honour* to the Monarch's Character.

Is

Is it so, my Soul? Is this the *only, only* Time allotted, for obtaining the great Reward, and making thy Salvation sure? And art Thou lulled in a *vain Security*; or dreaming on in a *supine Inadvertency*? Start, O! start from thy Trance. Gird up the Loins of thy Mind, and work while it is Day. Improve the present Seed-time, that Eternity may yield a joyful Harvest.---We especially, who are *Watchmen* in *Israel*, and *Ministers* of the glorious *Gospel*; may *We* be awakened, by this Consideration, to all Afiduity in our holy Office. Some or other of *our People*, are ever and anon departing into the invisible State; all *our Friends*, are making incessant Approaches to their long Home; and we *ourselves*, shall very shortly be transmitted to the Confinement of the Tomb. *This* is the favourable Juncture, wherein *alone* we can contribute to their endless Welfare. This is the Crisis, the *all-important Crisis*, of their final Felicity. Instantly, therefore, let us pour in our wholesome Instructions; instantly, let Us ply them with our earnest Exhortations. A Moment's Delay, may be an irreparable Loss; may be irretrievable Ruin. While we procrastinate, a fatal Stroke may intervene; and place *Us*, beyond the Power of administering;

32 CONTEMPLATIONS

administring; or place *Them*, beyond all Possibility of receiving, any spiritual Good*.

How frequently is the Face of Nature *changed!* and, by changing, made more *agreeable!*---The long-continued Glitter of the Day, renders the soothing Shades of the Evening doubly welcome. Nor does the Morn ever purple the East with so pleasing a Lustre, as after the fullen Gloom of a dark and black Night.---At present, a *Calm* of Tranquillity, and undisturbed Repose, is spread through the Universe. The weary Winds have forgot to blow. The gentle Gales have fanned themselves asleep. Nothing stirs. Not so much as a single Leaf nods. Even the quivering Aspin rests. *And not one Breath curls o'er the Stream.*---Sometimes, the *Tempest* summons all the Forces of the Air; and pours itself, with resistless Fury, from the angry North. The whole Atmosphere is tossed into tumultuous Con-

* The *Case*, represented by the *Prophet* (1 Kings xx. 40.) seems perfectly applicable on this Occasion. *As thy Servant was busy here and there, He was gone.* So, while we are either *remiss* in our Function, or laying ourselves out upon *inferior Cares*, the People of our Charge may be gone:---gone beyond the Influence of our *Counsels*; beyond the Reach of our *Prayers*:---gone into the *unchangeable* and eternal State,

fusion,

fusion, and the watry World is heaved to the Clouds. The astonished Mariner, and his straining Vessel, now scale the rolling Mountain, and hang dreadfully visible on the broken Surge: now shoot, with headlong Impetuosity, into the yawning Gulph; and neither Hulk, nor Mast, is seen. The Storm sweeps over the Continent: raves along the City-streets: struggles through the Forest-boughs; and terrifies the savage Nations with a Howl, more wildly horrid than their own. The knotty Oaks bend before the Blast; their iron Trunks groan; and their stubborn Limbs are dashed to the Ground. The lofty Dome rocks; and even the solid Tower totters on it's Basis.

SUCH Variations are kindly contrived, with an evident Condescension to the Fickleness of our Taste. Because, a perpetual *Similarity* of Objects would create a cold *Disgust*; therefore, the indulgent Father of our Race has diversified the universal Scene, and bid every Appearance bring with it the *Charm of Novelty*.---But this Circumstance is as *beneficial*, as it is *entertaining*. Providence, ever gracious to Mortals; ever intent upon promoting our Felicity; has taken care to mingle, in the Constitution of Things,

34 CONTEMPLATIONS

what is pleasing to our Imagination, with what is serviceable to our Interests. The piercing Winds, and rugged Aspect of Winter, render the balmy Gales, and flowery Scenes of Spring, peculiarly delightful. At the same time, the keen Frosts mellow the Soil, and prepare it for the Hand of Industry. The rushing Rains impregnate the Glebe, and fit it for a Magazine of Plenty. The Earth is a great *Laboratory*; and *December's* Cold collects the gross Materials, which are *sublimated* by the refining Warmth of *May*. The Air is a pure *elastic* Fluid; and was it always to remain in this motionless Serenity, it would lose much of its *active Spring*; was it never agitated by *those* wholesome *Concussions*, it would contract a noisome, perhaps, a pestilential Taint. Instead of purifying, it would corrupt the vital Juices; and, instead of inhaling Refreshments, our Respiration might be a Source of Diseases; or every Gasp we draw, might be Death*.

* Considering the immense Quantity of Coals, and other combustible Materials, that are daily consumed, and evaporate into the Air. Considering the numberless Steams, and Clouds of Smoke, that almost continually overwhelm populous Cities;---the noisome Exhalations that arise from thronged Infirmaries, and loathsome Gaols; from stagnating Lakes, and putrid Fens;---the Variety of offensive and unwholesome Effluvia, that proceed from

---How

---How then should we admire! Oh! how should we adore, that happy Union of Bignity and Wisdom; which, from a *Variety* of Dispensations, produces an *Uniformity* of Good; a perpetual Succession of Delights, and an uninterrupted Series of Advantages!

THE *Darkness* is now at it's Height; and I cannot but admire the obliging Manner of it's taking place. It comes not with a blunt and *abrupt Incivility*, but makes gentle and *respectful Advances*. A precipitate Transition, from the Splendors of Day, to all the Horrors of Midnight, would be both inconvenient and frightful. It would bewilder the Traveller in his Journey; it would strike the Creation with Amazement; and, perhaps, be pernicious to the Organs of Sight. Therefore, the Gloom rushes not upon us instantaneously, but increases by

other Causes;---it is a very remarkable Instance of a Providence, at once tenderly kind, and infinitely powerful, that *Mankind* is not *suffocated* with *Stench*; that the *Air* is not *choaked* with *Filth*.---The Air is the *common Sewer*, into which ten thousand times ten thousand Nuisances are incessantly discharged; and yet is preserved so *thoroughly clear*, as to afford the most transparent Medium for *Vision*; so *delicately undulatory*, as to transmit, with all imaginable Distinctness, every Diversity of Sound; so *perfectly pure*, as to be the constant Refiner of the Fluids, in every Animal that breathes.

36 CONTEMPLATIONS

slow Degrees ; and, sending *Twilight* before as it's *Harbinger*, decently advertises us of it's Approach. By this means, we are neither alarmed, nor incommoded, by the Change ; but are able to take all suitable and timely Measures, for it's Reception.--- Thus graciously has Providence regulated, not only the *grand Vicissitudes* of the Seasons, but also the *common Interchanges* of Light and Darkness, with an apparent Reference to *our Comfort*.

Now, the fierce *Inhabitants* of the *Forest* forsake their Dens. A thousand grim Forms, a thousand growling Monsters, pace the Desert. Death is in their Jaws, while, stung with Hunger, and athirst for Blood, they roam their nightly Rounds.---O! *unfortunate Traveller*, overtaken by the Night, in those dismal Wilds ! How must he stand aghast, at the mingled Yell of ravenous Throats, and Lions roaring after their Prey ! Defend Him, propitious Heaven ! or else He must see his endearing Spouse, and hail his native Home, no more !---Now, the prowling Wolf, like a murderous Ruffian, dogs the Shepherd's Footsteps, and besets his bleating Charge. The Fox, like a crafty Felon, steals

steals to the thatched Cottage, and carries off the feathered Booty.

HAPPY for the World, were these the only Destroyers that walk in Darkness. But, alas! there are *Savages* in *human Shape*; who, muffled in Shades, infest the Abodes of civilized Life. The *Sons* of *Violence* make Choice of this Season*, to perpetrate the most outrageous Acts of Wrong and Robbery. The *Adulterer* waiteth for the Twilight; and, baser than the Villain on the Highway, betrays the Honour of his Bosom-friend. Now, *Faction* forms her close Cabals, and whispers her traiterous Insinuations. Now *Rebellion* plans her accursed Plots, and prepares the Train to blow a Nation into Ruin. Now, Crimes that hide their odious Heads in the Day, haunt the Seats of Society, and stalk through the Gloom with audacious Front. Now, the *Vermin* of the *Stews* crawl from their lurking Holes, to wallow in Sin, and feed on the Venom of the Night. Each soothing himself with the *fond Notion*, That all is safe; That *no Eye sees*.

* ————— When Night

Darkens the Streets, then wander forth the Sons
Of *Belial*, flown with Insolence and Wine. MILT.

38 CONTEMPLATIONS

AND are They then concealed? Preposterous Madmen! To draw the Curtain between their infamous Practices, and a *little Set* of Mortals; but lay them open, to all these chaste and *wakeful Eyes* of Heaven *! ---Are they then concealed? No, truly: Were these vigilant Luminaries closed; an Eye *keener* than the Lightning's Flash, *brighter* than Ten thousand Suns, beholds their every Motion. Their *thickest Shades* are beaming Day †, to the jealous Inspector, and supreme Judge of human Actions.---Deluded Creatures! have ye not heard, have ye not read, "That Clouds and Darknes " are His majestic Residence ‡?" In that very Gloom, to which you fly for Covert, he erects his Throne. What you reckon your *Screen*, is the *Bar* of his *Tribunal*. O! remember this: Stand in Awe, and sin not. Remember, that the great and terrible God is about your *Path* ||, when you take your

* ——— *Sed Luna videt, sed Sidera Testes
Intendunt Oculos.*

† This is finely, and very forcibly, expressed by the Psalmist: *If I say, Peradventure the Darknes shall cover me: then shall my Night be turned to Day: Or, as it may be rendered somewhat more emphatically, Even the Night shall be broad Day-light all around me.* Psal. cxxxix. 10.

‡ Psal. xcvi. 2.

|| The original Words are much stronger than the Translation. זרית and הסננתה signify, Thou *sistest* midnight

midnight Range ; is *about your Bed*, when you indulge the loose Desire ; and *spies out all your Ways*, be they ever so secretly conducted, or artfully disguised.

SOME Minutes ago, a Passenger crossed along the Road. His Horse's Foot struck the Ground, and fetched Fire from a Flint. My Eye, though at a Distance, caught the View ; and saw, with *great Clearness*, the bright Sparkles : Of which, had I been ever so near, I should not have discerned the *least Glimpse*, under the Blaze of Day.---So*, when Sickness has drawn a *Veil* over the

my Path ; and art *familiarly*, or *intimately*, acquainted with all my Ways. The former, I apprehend, denoting the *exact* Cognizance, which the Almighty taketh ; the latter implying the *constant* Inspection, which he exerciseth ; over all the Circumstances of our Conduct, *Psal.* cxxxix. 2.

* I beg leave to inform the *young Gentleman*, whose Name dignifies my Dedication ; That *this* was a Remark of his honoured *Father*, when we rode together, and conversed in a dusky Evening. I mention this Circumstance, partly, to secure the Paragraph from Contempt ; partly, to give Him, and the World, an Idea of that eminently serious Taste, which distinguished my deceased Friend.---The *less obvious* the *Reflection*, the more clearly it discovers a Turn of Mind, remarkably spiritual ; which would suffer nothing to escape, without yielding some religious Improvement. The *meaner* the *Incident*, the more admirable was that Fertility of Imagination ; which could deduce the noblest Truths, from the most trivial Occurrences.

40 CONTEMPLATIONS

Gaiety of our Hearts ; when *Misfortunes* have *eclipsed* the Splendor of our outward Circumstances ; how many *important Convictions* present themselves, with the brightest Evidence ! Under the Sunshine of Prosperity, they lay undiscovered ; but, when some intervening Cloud has darkened the Scene, they emerge out of their Obscurity, and even glitter upon our Minds. Then, the *World*, that delusive Cheat, confesses her Emptiness : but JESUS, the bright and Morning-Star, beams forth with inimitable Lustre. Then, *Vice* loses all her fallacious Allurements ; that painted Strumpet is horrible, as the Hags of Hell : but *Virtue*, despised Virtue, gains Loveliness from a luring Providence, and treads the Shades with more than mortal Charms.---May this reconcile me, and all the *Sons of Sorrow*, to our appointed Share of Suffering ! If Tribulation tend to dissipate the inward Darkness, and pour heavenly Day upon our Minds ; welcome Distress ; welcome Disappointment ; welcome whatever our froward Flesh, or peevish Passions, would *miscal* Calamities. *These light Afflictions, which are but for a Moment*, shall sit easy upon our Spirits ; since they befriend our Knowledge ; promote our Faith ; and so, “ *work out for*
“ *us,*

“ us, a far more exceeding and eternal Weight
“ of Glory *.”

How has this *Darkness* snatched every splendid and graceful Object from my Sight ! It has dashed the Sponge over the Pictures of Spring, and destroyed all the *delicate Distinctions* of Things. Where are now the fine Tinges, that so lately charmed me from the glowing Parterre ? The Blush is struck out, from the Cheeks of the Rose ; and the snowy Hue, is dropt from the Lily. I cast my Eyes toward a magnificent Seat ; but the aspiring Columns, and fair-expanded Front, are mingled in rude Confusion. Without the Sun, all the

* 2 Cor. iv. 17. The great *Stephens*, that Oracle of *Grecian* Learning, translates our Apostle's Phrase — καὶ ὅτι υπερβολὴν, *Quo nihil majus dici aut fingi potest*. But how does the Sense rise ! How is the Idea enlarged, under *Two* such forcible Expressions !---The whole Verse is a Master-piece of the beautiful *Antithesis*, the lively *Description*, and the nervous *Diction*. It is one of those noble Passages in the inspired Writings, which, like some rich *aromatic Plants*, cannot be transferred from their own generous and native Soil, without being impaired in their Vivacity, and losing much of their Delicacy. Perhaps, the following Version may be somewhat less injurious to the sacred Original, than the common Translation ;---
Our very light Affliction, which is but just for the present Moment, worketh out a far more exceeding, an incomparably great, and eternal Weight of Glory.

Elegance

42 CONTEMPLATIONS

Elegance of the blooming World, is a *mere Blank*; all the *Symmetry* of Architecture, a *shapeless Heap*.

Is not this an expressive Emblem of the *Loveliness*, which the *Sun* of *Righteousness* transfuses into all that is amiable? Was it not for JESUS, and his *Merits*, I should sigh with Anguish of Spirit; even while I rove through Ranks of the most beautiful Flowers, or breathe amidst a Wilderness of Sweets. Was it not for JESUS, and his *Merits*; I should roam like some *disconsolate Spectre*, even through the Smiles of Creation, and the Caresses of Fortune. My Conversation in this World, though dressed in the most engaging Forms of external Pleasure, would be like the Passage of a *condemned Malefactor*, through enamelled Meadows, and Bowers of Bliss, to be broke upon the Wheel, or tortured to Death on the Rack. But a *daily Reflection*, on the LAMB's atoning Blood; a *comfortable Trust*, that my Soul is reconciled through this glorious Expiation; this is the Ray, the golden Ray, that irradiates the Face of the Universe. This is the *Oil of Beauty*, which makes all Things wear a chearful Aspect; and the *Oil of Gladness*, which disposes the Spectator

Spectator to behold them with Delight *.
This, this, is the secret Charm, that teaches
Nature, in all her Operations, so exquisitely
to please.

“ MAN goeth forth to his Work, and to
“ his Labour, till the Evening.” But then
his Strength fails; his Spirits flag; and he
stands in need, not only of some *Respite*
from *Toil*, but of some kindly and sovereign
Refreshments.---What an admirable Provision
for this Purpose, is *Sleep*! Sleep introduces
a most welcome Vacation, both for the Soul
and Body. The Exercises of the Brain, and
the Labours of the Hands, are at once dis-
continued. So that the *weary Limbs* repair

* Thus applied, that fine Piece of *Flattery*, addressed
to the *Heathen* Emperor, is strictly and literally true.

——— *Vultus ubi tuus*
Affulsit populo, gratior it dies,
Et soles melius nitent.

HORAT.

Which I would cast in a *Christian* Mould, and thus
translate :

When Faith presents the Saviour's Death,
And whispers, “ This is thine ;”
Sweetly my rising Hours advance,
And peacefully decline.
While such my Views, the radiant Sun
Sheds a more sprightly Ray ;
Each Object smiles ; all Nature charms :
I sing my Cares away.

their

44 CONTEMPLATIONS

their exhausted Vigour; while the *pensive Thoughts* drop their Load of Sorrows, and the *busy* ones rest from the Fatigue of intense Application.-----Most reviving Cordial! Equally beneficial to our animal and intellectual Powers. It supple the *fleshy Machine*, and keeps all it's nice Movements in a proper Posture for easy Play. It animates the *thinking Faculties* with fresh Alacrity, and rekindles their Ardor for the Studies of the Dawn. Without these enlivening Recruits, how soon would the most robust Constitution, be wasted into a *walking Skeleton*; and the most learned Sage, degenerate into a *boary Idiot*!---Some time ago, I beheld, with Surprise, poor *Florio*. His Air was wild; his Countenance meagre; his Thoughts roving, and Speech disconcerted. Inquiring the Cause of this strange Alteration, I was informed, That, for several Nights, he had not closed his Eyes in Sleep. For want of which *noble Restorative*; that sprightly Youth, who was once the Life of the Discourse, and the Darling of the Company; is become a Spectacle of Misery and Horror.

How many of my Fellow-Creatures are, at this very Instant, confined to the *Bed of Languishing*; and complaining, with that
4
illustrious

illustrious Sufferer of old, *Wearisome Nights are appointed to me**! Instead of indulging soft Repose, they are counting the tedious Hours; telling every striking Clock; or measuring the very Moments, by their throbbing Pulse. How many, *barassed* with Pain, most passionately long to obtain some little Truce from their Agonies, in peaceful Slumbers! How many, *sick* with *Disquietude*, and restless even on their downy Pillows, would purchase this transient Oblivion of their Woes, almost at any Rate!----That, which Wealth cannot procure; which Multitudes sigh for in vain; thy God has bestowed on Thee, times out of Number. The *welcome Visitant*, punctual at the needed Hour, has entered thy Chamber, and poured his Poppies round thy Couch. Has gently closed thy Eye-lids, and shed his slumberous Dews over all thy Senses.

SINCE Sleep is so absolutely necessary; so inestimably valuable; observe, what a *fine Apparatus* Almighty Goodness has made, to accommodate us with the *balmy Blessing*. With how kind a Precaution, He removes whatever might obstruct it's Access, or impede it's Influence! He draws around us

* Job vii. 3.

46 CONTEMPLATIONS

the *Curtain of Darknefs*; which inclines us to a drowfy Indolence, and conceals every Object, that might too strongly agitate the Sense. He conveys *Peace* into our *Apartments*; and imposes Silence, on the whole Creation. Every Animal is bidden to tread softly, or rather to cease from it's Motion, when Man is retiring to his Repose.---May we not discern, in this gracious Disposition of Things, the *tender Cares* of a *Nursing-Mother*; who hushes every Noise, and secludes every Disturbance, when she has laid the Child of her Love to Rest? So, by such soothing Circumstances, and gently-working Opiates, *HE giveth to his Beloved, Sleep* *.

ANOTHER signal Instance of a Providence intent upon our Welfare, is, that we are preserved *safe* in the Hours of *Slumber*. How are we then lost to all Apprehension of Danger; even though the Murderer be at our Bed-side, or his naked Sword at our Breast! Destitute of all Concern for ourselves, we are unable to *think of*, much more to *provide for*, our own Security. At these Moments, therefore, we lie open to innumerable Perils: Perils, from the resistless Rage of *Flames*: Perils, from the insidious

* Psal. cxxvii. 2.

Artifices of *Thieves*, or the outrageous Violence of *Robbers*; without either Vigilance to observe the Foe, or Strength to resist the Assault: Perils, from the *irregular Workings**

* I think, it is referable only to a superintending and watchful *Providence*, that We are not hurried, when our Imagination is heated, and our Reason stupefied by Dreams, into the most *pernicious* Actions.---We have sometimes heard of unfortunate Persons, who, walking in their Sleep, have thrown themselves headlong from a Window, and been dashed to Death on the Pebbles. And whence is it, that such disastrous Accidents are only *related* as Pieces of News, not *experienced* by Ourselves, or our Families? Were *our* Minds more sober in their Operations, or more circumspect in their Regards? No, verily: Nothing could be more wild, than their Excursions; none more inattentive to their own Welfare. Therefore, if *We have laid Us down, and slept* in Peace; it was, because the LORD vouchsafed Us the sweet Refreshment: if *We rose again* in Safety; it was, *because the LORD sustained Us* with his unremitted Protection.

Will the candid Reader excuse me, if I add a short Story, or rather a *Matter of Fact*, which I know to be true?---Two Persons that had been hunting together in the Day, slept together the following Night. One of them was renewing the Pursuit in his Dream; and, having run the whole Circle of the Chace, came, at last, to the Fall of the Stag. Upon this, He cries out with a determined Ardor; *I'll kill him: I'll kill him:* and immediately feels for the Knife, which he carried in his Pocket. His Companion, happening to be awake, and observing what passed, leaped from the Bed; and, being secure from Danger, stood (for the Moon shined into the Room) to view the Event. When, to his inexpressible Surprise, the infatuated Sportsman gave several deadly Stabs, in the very Place, where, a Moment before, the Throat and the Life of his Friend lay.---This I mention, as a Proof,

of

48 CONTEMPLATIONS

of our own Thoughts, and especially from the Incurfions of our fpiritual Enemy. What dreadful Mifchief might that reftlefs, that implacable *Adverfary* of *Mankind* work, were there not an invifible Hand to controul his Rage, and protect poor Mortals! What Scenes of Horror might he represent to our Imaginations, and “fcare us with Dreams, “or terrify us with Vifions*!” But the *Keeper* of *Israel*, who never flumbers, nor fleeps, interpoles in our Behalf; at once to *cherish* us under his Wings, and to *defend* us as with a *Shield*. It is faid of *Solomon*, “That Threescore valiant Men were about “his Bed; all expert in War; every one “with his Sword upon his Thigh, becaufe “of Fear in the Night†.” But one greater than *Solomon*; One mightier than Myriads of armed Hofts, even the great JEHOVAH, in whom is everlafting Strength; He vouch-

that nothing hinders Us, even from being *Affaffins* of *Others*, or *Murderers* of *Ourselves*, amidft the mad Sallies of Sleep; only the *preventing* Care of our Heavenly Father.

* What a compleat Master that malignant Spirit is, in exhibiting *visionary Representations*, appears from his Conduct towards CHRIST, on the high Mountain; and that he is too ready, if not reftained by an over-ruling Power, to employ his Dexterity in *afflicting* *Mankind*, is evident from his Treatment of *Job*. See *Luke* iv. 5. *Job* vii. 14.

† Cant. iii. 7, 8.

fafes

safes to watch over our sleeping Minutes, and to stop all the Avenues of Ill.---Oh! the unwearied and condescending *Goodness* of our Creator! Who *lulls* us to our *Rest*, by bringing on the silent Shades; and *plants* his own ever-watchful Eye as our *Centinel*, while we enjoy the needful Repose.

REASON, now, resigns her sedate Office; and *Fancy*, extravagant *Fancy*, leads the Mind through a *Maze* of *Vanity*. The Head is crouded with false Images, and tantalized with the most ridiculous Misapprehensions of Things. Some, are expatiating amidst *Fairy Fields*, and gathering Garlands of visionary Bliss; while their Bodies are stretched on a Wisp of Straw, and sheltered by the Cobwebs of a Barn. Others, quite insensible of their Rooms of State, are mourning in a *doleful Dungeon*, or struggling with the raging Billows. Perhaps, with hasty Steps, they climb the craggy Cliff; and, with *real* Anxiety, fly from the *imaginary* Danger. Or else, benumbed with sudden Fear, and finding themselves unable to escape, they give up at once their Hopes, and their Efforts; and, though reclined on a Couch of Ivory, are sinking, all helpless

50 CONTEMPLATIONS

and distressed, in the furious Whirlpool. So unaccountable are the *Vagaries* of the *Brain*, while Sleep maintains it's Dominion over the Limbs!

BUT is This the only Season, when absurd and incoherent Irregularities play their Magic on our Minds? Are there not those who *dream*, even in their *waking* Moments? ----Some pride themselves in a Notion of *superior Excellency*, because the Royal Favour has annexed a few splendid Titles to their Names; or because the dying Silkworm has bequeathed her finest Threads, to cover their Nakedness.---Others congratulate their own *signal Happiness*, because Loads of golden Lumber are amassed together in their Coffers; or promise themselves a most superlative Felicity indeed, when some Thousands more are added to the useless Heap.---Nor are there wanting Others, who gape after *substantial* Satisfaction from *airy* Applause; and flatter themselves with, I know not what, Immortality in the momentary Buz of Renown. Are any of These a Whit more reasonable in their *Opinions*, than the poor ragged Wretch in his *Reveries*; who, while snoring under a Hedge, exults in the Possession of his stately Palace,
and

and sumptuous Furniture?--If Persons, who are very *Vassals* to their own *domineering* Passions, and led captive by numberless Temptations: if these Persons pique themselves with a Conceit of their *Liberty*, and fancy themselves the *generous* and *gallant* Spirits of the Age: where is the Difference between Theirs; and the Madman's Phrensy; who, though *chained* to the Floor, is *throned* in Thought, and wielding an imaginary Sceptre?---In a Word; as many as borrow their Dignity from a Plume of Feathers, or the gaudy Trappings of Fortune; as many as send their Souls to seek for Bliss in the Blandishments of Sense, or in any thing short of the Divine Favour, and a well-grounded Hope of the incorruptible Inheritance*; what are they, but Dreamers with their Eyes open; *delirious*, though in *Health*?

WOULD you see their *Picture*, drawn to the very *Life*; and the Success of their *Schemes*, calculated with the utmost *Exactness*; cast your Eye upon that fine Repre-

* These give a sacred, and home-felt Delight,
A sober Certainty of waking Bliss.

MILT. *Comus*.

52 CONTEMPLATIONS

sentation, exhibited by the Prophet: *It shall be even as when a hungry Man dreameth, and behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his Soul is empty: Or as when a thirsty Man dreameth, and behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and behold, he is faint, and his Soul hath Appetite**. Such is the Race, and such the Prize, of all those Candidates for Honour and Joy; who run wide of the Mark of the high Calling of GOD, in CHRIST JESUS. They live in Vanity, and die in Woe.---Awaken us, merciful LORD, from these noon-tide Trances! Awaken us, while Conviction may turn to our Advantage, and not serve only to increase our Torment. O! let our "Eyes be enlightened, to discern the Things that are excellent;" and no longer be imposed upon by fantastic Appearances, which, however *pompous* they may seem, will prove more *empty* than the Visions of the Night, more *transient* than the Dream that is forgotten.

HAVING mentioned *Sleep* and *Dreams*, let me once again consider those remarkable Incidents of our Frame: so very remarkable, that I may venture to call them, a kind of experimental *Mystery*, and little less

* Isa. xxix. 8.

than a standing *Miracle*.---Behold the most *vigorous Constitution*, when stretched on the Bed of Ease, and totally resigned to the Slumbers of the Night. It's Activity is oppressed with Fetters of Indolence ; it's Strength is consigned over to a temporary Annihilation ; the Nerves are like a Bow unstrung, and the whole animal System like a motionless Log.---Behold a Person of the most *delicate Sensations*, and *amiable Dispositions*. His Eyes, though thrown wide open, admit not the visual Ray ; at least, distinguish not Objects. His Ears, with the Organs unimpaired, and articulate Accents beating upon the Drum, perceive not the Sound ; at least, apprehend not the Meaning. The Senses, and their exquisitely fine Feelings, are overwhelmed with an unaccountable Stupefaction. You call him a *social* Creature ; but where are his social Affections ? He knows not the Father, that begat him ; and takes no Notice of the Friend, that is as his own Soul. The Wife of his Bosom may expire by his Side, and He lie unconcerned as a Barbarian. The Children of his Body, may be tortured with the severest Pangs ; and He, even in the same Chamber, remain untouched with the least Commiseration.---Behold the most in-

54 CONTEMPLATIONS

genious Scholar : whose Judgment is piercing, and able to trace the most intricate Difficulties of Science; his Taste refined, and quick to relish all the Beauties of Sentiment and Composition. Yet, at this Juncture, the thinking Faculties are unhinged, and the intellectual Oeconomy quite disconcerted. Instead of close-connected Reasonings, nothing but a disjointed Huddle of absurd Ideas : instead of well-digested Principles, nothing but a disorderly Jumble of crude Conceptions. The most palpable Delusions, impose upon his Imagination. The whole Night passes, and he frequently mistakes it for a single Minute : is not sensible of the Transition, hardly sensible of any Duration.

YET, no sooner does the Morning draw back his Curtain, and Day-light fill the Room; but he awakes, and finds himself *possessed* of all the valuable Endowments; which, for several Hours, were *suspended*, or lost. He feels his Sinews braced, and fit for Action : his Senses are alert and keen. The frozen Affections melt with Tenderness : the romantic Visionary brightens into the Master of Reason. And, what is beyond measure surprising, the intoxicated
Mind

Mind works itself sober, not by *slow Degrees*; but, in the *Twinkling* of an Eye, recovers from it's Perturbation.—Why does not the Numbness, that seizes the animal Powers, continue; and chain the Limbs, in a perpetual listless Inability? Why does not the Stupor, that deadens all the nice Operations of the Senses, hold fast it's Possession? When the Thoughts are once dis-adjusted, why are they not always in Confusion? How is it, that they are rallied in a Moment; and, from the wildest Irregularity, reduced to the most orderly Array?—From an *Inactivity*, resembling Death; and from *Extravagancies*, little differing from Madness; how is the Body so *suddenly* restored, to Vigour and Agility? How is the Understanding *instantaneously* re-established, in Sedateness and Harmony?—Surely, “this is the LORD'S Doing, and it should be marvellous in our Eyes:” should awaken our Gratitude, and inspirit our Praise.

THIS is the Time, in which *Ghosts* are supposed to make their Appearance. Now, the *timorous Imagination* teems with Phantoms, and creates numberless Terrors to itself. Now dreary Forms, in fullen State, stalk along the Gloom; or, swifter than

56 CONTEMPLATIONS

Lightning, glide across the Shades. Now, Voices more than mortal* are heard from the echoing Vaults, and Groans issue from the hollow Tombs. Now, melancholy Spectres visit the Ruins of ancient Monasteries, and frequent the solitary Dwellings of the Dead. They pass and repass, in unsubstantial Images, along the forsaken Galleries; or take their determined Stand, over some lamented Grave.---How often has the School-boy fetched a long Circuit, and trudged many a needless Step, in order to avoid the haunted *Church-yard*? Or, if Necessity, sad Necessity, has obliged him to cross the Spot; where *human Skulls* are lodged below, and the *baleful Yews* shed supernumerary Horrors above: a thousand hideous Stories rush into his Memory: Fear adds Wings to his Feet; he scarce touches the Ground; dares not once look behind him: and blesses his good Fortune, if no frightful Sound purred at his Heels, if no ghastly Shape bolted upon his Sight †.

'Tis strange, to observe the excessive Timidity, that possesses many Peoples Minds,

* *Vox quoque per lucos vulgo exaudita silentes
Ingens, & simulacra modis pallentia miris
Visa sub obscurum noctis.*——— VIRG.

† See that valuable Poem, titled THE GRAVE.

on

on this *fanciful Occasion*; while they are void of all Concern, on others of the most *tremendous Import*. Those, who are startled, in any dark and lonely Walk, at the *very Apprehension* of a single Spectre; are nevertheless unimpressed at the *sure Prospect*, of entering into a whole World of disembodied Beings. Nay, are without any Emotions of Awe, though they know themselves to be hastening into the Presence of the Great, Infinite, and Eternal Spirit.---Should some pale Messenger from the Regions of the Dead, draw back our Curtains at the Hour of Midnight; and, appointing some particular Place, say, as the horrid Apparition to *Brutus*, *I'll meet thee there**: I believe, the boldest Heart would feel something like a Panic; would seriously think upon the Adventure, and be in Pain for the Event. But, when a Voice from Heaven cries, in the awakening Language of the Prophet, *Prepare to meet thy GOD, O Israel*†; how little is the Warning regarded! How soon

* The Story of *Brutus*, and his *evil Genius*, is well known. Nor must it be denied, that the precise Words of the Spectre to the Hero were, *I'll meet thee at Philippi*. But, as this would not answer my Purpose, I was obliged to make an Alteration, in the Circumstance of *Place*.

† Amos iv. 12.

58 CONTEMPLATIONS

is it forgot! Preposterous Stupidity! To be
utterly unconcerned, where it is the truest
 Wisdom to take the Alarm; and to be *all*
Trepidation, where there is nothing really
 terrible!---Do Thou, my Soul, remember
 thy Saviour's Admonition; " I will fore-
 " warn you, whom you shall fear. Fear
 " not these imaginary Horrors of the Night:
 " but fear that awful Being; whose Reve-
 " lation of Himself, though with Expres-
 " sions of peculiar Mercy, made *Moses*, his
 " favourite Servant, tremble exceedingly:
 " whose Manifestation, with Purposes of
 " inexorable Vengeance, will make *mighty*
 " *Conquerors*; that were familiar with Dan-
 " gers, and estranged to Dismay; call upon
 " the Mountains to fall on them, and the
 " Rocks to cover them: The Menace of
 " whose majestic Eye, when He comes at-
 " tended with Thousand thousands of his
 " immortal Hosts, will make the very Hea-
 " vens cleave asunder, and the World flee
 " away.---O! dread his *Displeasure*; secure
 " his *Favour*; and then Thou may'st com-
 " mit all thy other *Anxieties* to the Wind;
 " Thou may'st laugh at every other Fear."

THIS brings to my Mind a memorable
 and amazing Occurrence, recorded in the
 Book

Book of *Job* *: which is, I think, no inconsiderable Proof of the *real Existence* of Apparitions †, on some *very extraordinary* Emergencies; while it discountenances those Legions of idle Tales, which Superstition has raised, and Credulity received. Since it teaches us, that if, at any time, those Vifitants from the unknown World, render

* Job iv. 12, 14, &c.

† *Proof of the real Existence of Apparitions*, ---If the Sense, in which I have always understood this Passage, be true.---*Eliphaz*, I apprehend, was neither in a Trance, nor in a Dream, but perfectly awake.----Though He speaks of Sleep; He speaks of it, as fallen not upon *himself*, but upon *other* Men. He does not mention *Dreams*, though חלומות *Somnia*, would have suited the Verse (if the Book be in Metre) altogether as well as חזיונות *Visiones*.----It could not, I think, be a *Wind*, as some translate the Word רוח. Because, the Circumstance of *standing still*, is not so compatible with the Nature of a Wind; and a Wind would have passed *above* Him; all *around* Him, as well as *before* Him; not to add, how low a Remark it is, and how unworthy of a Place in so august a Description, that He *could not discern the Form* of a Wind.---It seems, therefore, to have been a *real Spirit*; either *Angelical*, as were those, which presented themselves to *Abraham* resting at the Door of his Tent, and to *Lot* sitting in the Gate of *Sodom*; or else, the Spirit of some *departed Saint*, as in the Case of *Samuel's* Apparition, or the famous Appearance of *Moses* and *Elijah* on the Mount of Transfiguration.---A Spirit, assuming some *Vehicle*, in order to become visible to the human Eye. Which, accordingly, *Eliphaz* saw, exhibiting itself as an Object of Sight. But saw so *obscurely*, and *indistinctly*, as not to be able, either to describe it's *Aspect*, or to discern *whom* it resembled.

themselves

60 CONTEMPLATIONS

themselves perceivable by Mortals, it is not upon any Errand of frivolous Consequence; but, to *convey Intelligencies* of the utmost Moment, or to *work Impressions* of the highest Advantage.

'Twas in the *Dead of Night*. All Nature lay shrouded in Darkness. Every Creature was buried in Sleep. The most profound Silence reigned through the Universe. In these solemn Moments, *Eliphaz* alone, all wakeful and solitary, was musing upon sublime and heavenly Subjects.----When, lo! an awful Being, from the invisible Realms, burst into his Apartment*. *A Spirit passed before his Face*. *Astonishment* seized the Beholder. His Bones shivered within Him; his Flesh trembled all over Him; and the

* I have given this *solemn Picture a modern Dress*, rather for the Sake of Variety and Illustration, than from any Apprehension of improving the admirable Original. Such an Attempt, I am sensible, would be more absurd, than to lacquer Gold, or paint the Diamond. The Description, in *Eliphaz's* own Language, is awful and affecting to the last Degree. A *Night-Piece*, dressed in all the Circumstances of the deepest Horror. I question, whether *Shakespeare* himself, though so peculiarly happy for his great Command of terrifying Images, has any thing superior or comparable to this. The Judges of fine Composition *see* the masterly Strokes; and, I believe, the most ordinary Reader *feels* them, chilling his Blood, and awakening Emotions of Dread in his Mind.

Hair

Hair of his Head stood erect with Horror. ---Sudden, and unexpected, was the *Appearance* of the Phantom ; but not such it's *Departure*. *It stood still*, to present itself more fully to his View. It made a solemn Pause, to prepare his Mind for some momentous Message.---After which, a *Voice* was heard. A Voice, for the Importance of it's Meaning, worthy to be had in everlasting Remembrance ; for the Solemnity of it's Delivery, enough to alarm a Heart of Stone. It spoke ; and this was the Purport of it's Words ;---“ *Shall Man, frail and wretched*
 “ *Man, be just before the mighty GOD ? Shall*
 “ *even the most upright and accomplished of*
 “ *Mortals be pure in the Sight of his Maker* ?*
 “ *Behold, and consider it attentively. He*
 “ *put no such Trust in his most exalted Ser-*
 “ *vants, as should bespeak them altogether*

* There seems to be a significant and beautiful *Gradation* in the *Hebrew* Words אָנוּשׁ and נֹכַח, which I have endeavoured to preserve, by a Sort of *paraphrastic Version*.---The Reader will observe a *new Turn* given to the Sentiment, and much *nobler* than that which our *English* Translation exhibits. The Passage, thus rendered, speaks a Truth incomparably more weighty, and needful to be inculcated. A Truth, exactly parallel to that humbling Confession of the Prophet, *We are all as an unclean Thing* ; and to that solemn Declaration of the Psalmist, *In thy Sight shall no Man living be justified*. *Vide Schult. in loc.*

“ incapable

62 CONTEMPLATIONS

“incapable of Defect, or authorize them
 “to arrogate any Honour to themselves.
 “*And his very Angels*, without the least In-
 “jury to their Character, *He charged with*
 “*Folly*; as sinking, even in the highest
 “Perfection of their Holiness, infinitely be-
 “neath his transcendent Glories; as falling,
 “even in all the Fidelity of their Obedi-
 “ence, inexpressibly short of the Homage
 “due to his most adorable Majesty. And,
 “if angelic Natures must not presume to
 “justify either Themselves, or their Services,
 “before immaculate, and uncreated Purity;
 “*how much less* doth such a Carriage become
 “*Them, that dwell in Houses of Clay*; whose
 “Original is from the Dust, and whose
 “State is all Imperfection!”

I would observe from hence, the very
 singular Necessity of that *Poverty of Spirit*,
 which intirely *renounces* it's own Attainments;
 and consequently, *submits* to the Righteous-
 ness of the incarnate God. To inculcate
 this Lesson, the Son of the Blessed came
 down from Heaven; and pressed no other
 Principle, with so repeated * an Impor-

* It is well worthy of our Observation, says an excel-
 lent Commentator, That no one Sentence uttered by our
 LORD, is so frequently repeated as this; *Whoever shall*
 tunity,

tunity, on his Hearers. To instil the same Doctrine, the HOLY GHOST touched the Lips of the Apostles with sacred Eloquence; and made it an eminent Part of their Commission, “to bring down every high Imagination.” That no Expedient might be wanting, to give it a deep and lasting Efficacy on the human Mind; a Phantom arises from the Valley of the Shadow of Death, or a Teacher descends from the Habitation of Spirits.---Whatever then we neglect; let us not neglect to cultivate *this Grace*, which has been so variously taught, so powerfully enforced.

HARK! a *doleful Voice*---With sudden Starts, and hideous Screams, it disturbs the Silence of the peaceful Night. 'Tis the *Screech-owl*, sometimes in frantic, sometimes in disconsolate Accents, uttering her Woes *. She flies the

exalt himself, shall be abased; and He that shall humble himself, shall be exalted: Which occurs at least Ten times in the Evangelists.

* *Solaque culminibus ferali carmine bubo
Sæpe queri, longasque in fletum ducere voces.*

Thus sung that charming Genius, that Prince of the ancient Poets, that most consummate Master of Elegance and Accuracy; all whose *Sentiments* are Nature, whose every *Description* is a Picture, whose whole *Language* is Music—*Virgil*.

vocal

64 CONTEMPLATIONS

vocal Grove, and shuns the Society of all the feathered Choir. The blooming Gardens, and flowery Meads, have no Charms for Her. Obscene Shades, ragged Ruins, and Walls overgrown with Ivy, are her favourite Haunts. Above, the mouldering Precipice nods, and threatens a Fall; below, the Toad crawls, or the poisonous Adder hisses. The sprightly Morning, which awakens other Animals into Joy, administers no Pleasure to this *gloomy Recluse*. Even the smiling Face of Day, is her Aversion; and all it's lovely Scenes, create nothing but Uneasiness.

So, just so, would it fare with the *Ungodly*; were it possible to suppose their Admission, into the chaste and bright *Abodes* of endless *Felicity*. They would find nothing but Disappointment and Shame, even at the Fountain-Head of Happiness and Honour. For how could the Tongue, habituated to *Profaneness*, taste any Delight in joining the harmonious Adorations of Heaven? How could the Lips, cankered with *Slander*, relish the Raptures of everlasting Praise? Where would be the Satisfaction of the *vain Beauty*, or the *supercilious Grandee*? Since, in the Temple of the Skies, no Incense

cense of Flattery would be addressed to the one; nor any obsequious Homage paid to the other. The transcendent, and immaculate Purity, of the blessed God, would *flash Confusion* on the lascivious Eye. And the envious Mind, must be on a *Rack* of self-tormenting *Passions*; to observe Millions of happy Beings, shining in all the Perfections of Glory, and solacing themselves in the Fulness of Joy. In short; the unsanctified Soul, amidst holy and triumphant Spirits; even in the refined Regions of Bliss and Immortality; would be like this melancholy Bird, *dislodged* from her darksome Retirement, and *imprisoned* under the Beams of Day*.

* I cannot forbear taking Notice, with what admirable *Emphasis* and *Propriety* our LORD touches this important Point, in his memorable Conference with *Nicodemus*. *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a Man be born again, He CANNOT enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; q. d. “ I “ wave the *Authority* of the Supreme Judge, and speak “ with the instructive *Condescension* of a Master in *Israel*. “ Though I might, without being liable to the least Con- “ tro- l, pass it into a sovereign Decree; That unrenewed “ Mortals, who are Slaves to corrupt Appetite, SHALL “ NOT enter the Habitations of the Just; I rather chuse “ to represent it, as a Case *utterly impossible*; and charge “ the Calamity not upon *Divine Severity*, but *human Folly*. Such Persons, from the very Nature of Things, “ preclude themselves; they incapacitate their own “ Minds; and Contrarieties must be reconciled, before “ *They*, in their unregenerate Condition, *can* be Partakers “ of those spiritual and sublime Delights.” *John* iii. 3.

66 CONTEMPLATIONS

THE Voice of this Creature screaming at our Windows, or of the Raven croaking over our Roof, is, they say, a *Token* of approaching *Death*. There are Persons, who would regard such an Incident, with no small Degree of Solicitude. Trivial as it is; it would damp their Spirits, and, perhaps, break, their Rest.---One cannot but wonder, that People should suffer themselves to be affrighted at such *fantastical*, and yet be quite unaffected with *real*, Presages of their Dissolution. Real Presages of this awful Event, address us from every Quarter. What are these *incumbent Glooms*, that overwhelm the World, but a kind of *Pall* provided for Nature; and an Image of that long Night, which will quickly cover the Inhabitants of the whole Earth? What an Affinity has the Sleep*, which will very soon weigh down my drowsy Eye-lids, with that State of in-tire Cessation, in which all my Senses must be laid aside! The silent Chamber, and the Bed of Slumber, are a very significant Representative of the Land, where all Things are hushed: all Things are forgotten.----What meant that deep *Death-Bell Note*, which, the other Evening, saddened the

* Et Consanguineus Lethi Sopor. VIRG.

Air? Laden with heaviest Accents, it struck our Ears, and seemed to knock at the Door of our Hearts. Surely, it brought a Message to surviving Mortals, and thus the Tidings ran: "Mortals, the Destroyer of your Race is on his Way. The last Enemy has begun the Chace; and is gaining Ground upon you; every Moment. His Paths are strewed with Heaps of Slain. Even now, his Javelin has laid one of your Neighbours in the Dust; and will soon, very soon, aim the *inevitable Blow* at every one of your Lives."

WE need not go down to the Charnel-House; nor carry our Search into the Repositories of the Dead; in order to find Memorials of our impending Doom. A Multitude of these Remembrancers are planted in all our Paths, and point the heedless Passengers to their long Home. I can hardly enter a considerable Town, but I meet the funeral Procession, or the Mourners going about the Streets. The *Atchievement* suspended on the Wall, or the *Crape* streaming in the Air, are silent Intimations; that both *Rich* and *Poor* have been emptying their Houses, and replenishing their Sepulchres. I can scarce join in any Conversation, but

68 CONTEMPLATIONS

mention is made of some that are given over by the Physician, and hovering on the Confines of Eternity ; of others, that have just left their Clay, amidst weeping Friends, and are gone to appear before the Judge of all the Earth. There's not a *News-Paper* comes to my Hand ; but, amidst all it's entertaining Narrations, reads several serious *Lectures* of *Mortality*. What else are the repeated Accounts, of Age, worn out by slow-consuming Sicknesses ; and of Youth, dashed to Pieces by some sudden Stroke of Casualty ? Of Patriots, exchanging their Seats in the Senate for a Lodging in the Tomb ; of Misers, resigning their Breath, and (O relentless Destiny !) leaving their very Riches for others ?---Even these Vehicles of our Amusement, are Registers of the Deceased ; and the Voice of *Fame* seldom sounds, but in Concert with a *Knell*.

THESE Monitors croud every Place ; not so much as the Scenes of our Diversions excepted. What are the Decorations of our public Buildings, and the most elegant Furniture of our Parlours ; but the Imagery of Death, and Trophies of the Tomb ? That marble Bust ; and those gilded Pictures ; how solemnly they *recognize* the Fate of others,
and

and speakingly *remind* us of our own!---I see; I hear; and Oh! I *feel*, this great Truth. It is interwoven with my Constitution. The frequent Decays of the Structure, foretel it's final Ruin. What are all the Pains, that have been darted through my Limbs; what every Disease, that has assaulted my Health; but the *advanced Guards* of the Foe? What are the Languors and Weariness, that attend the Labours of each revolving Day; but the more *secret Practices* of the Adversary, slowly undermining the earthly Tabernacle?

AMIDST so many Notices, shall we go on thoughtless and unconcerned? Can none of these Prognostics, which are sure as Oracles, awaken our Attention, and engage our Circumspection? *Noah*, 'tis written, *being warned of GOD, prepared an Ark*. O! imitate this excellent Example. Admonished by such a Cloud of Witnesses, be continually putting thyself in a Readiness for the last Change. Let not that Day, of which Thou hast so many infallible Signs, come upon thee unawares.---Get the *Ivy untwined*, and thy Affections disentangled from this enchanting World; that thou may'st be able to quit it, without Reluctance. Get the

70 CONTEMPLATIONS

dreadful *Hand-writing cancelled*, and all thy Sins blotted out; that thou may'st depart in Peace, and have nothing to fear at the decisive Tribunal. Get, O! get thy Soul interested in the Redeemer's *Merits*, and *transformed* into his sacred *Image*; then, shalt Thou be meet for the Inheritance of Saints in Light, and may'st even desire to be dissolved, and to be with CHRIST.

SOMETIMES, in my Evening Walk, I have heard

-----*The wakeful Bird*

*Sing darkling, and, in shadiest Covert hid,
Tune her nocturnal Note*.*

How different the *Airs* of this charming Songster, from those harsh and boding *Outcries*! The little Creature ran through all the Variations of Music; and shewed herself Mistress of every Grace, that constitutes or embellishes Harmony.----Sometimes, she swells a manly Throat, and her Song kindles into Ardor: the *Tone* is so *bold*, and strikes with such Energy, that you would imagine the sprightly Serenader in the very next Thicket. Anon, the *Strain languishes*, and the mournful Minstrel melts into Tender-

* MILT. Par. Loft, B. III. l. 38.

ness : the melancholy Notes just steal upon the Shades, and faintly touch your Ear ; or, in soft and sadly-pleasing Accents, seem to die along the distant Vale. Silence is all Attention ; and Night listens to the trilling Tale.

WHAT an Invitation is this, to slip away from the thronged City ! This coy and modest Minstrel, entertains only the *Lovers of Retirement*. Those, that are carousing over their Bowls, or ranting at the riotous Club, lose this Feast of Harmony.---In like manner, the Pleasures of Religion ; the Joy of Reconciliation with God ; the Satisfaction arising from the unbounded, ravishing, Prospect of a blissful Immortality ; these are all lost to the Mind, that is ever *in the Croud* ; and dares not, or delights not, to *retire into itself*.---Are we charmed with the Nightingale's Song ? Do we wish to have it nearer, and hear it oftener ? O ! let us seek a renewed Heart, and a resigned Will ; a Conscience that whispers Peace, and Passions that are tuned by Grace : then, shall we never want a Melody in our own *Breasts*, far more *musically pleasing*, than sweet *Philomela's* sweetest Strains.

As different as the *Voices* of these Birds, are the *Circumstances* of those few Mortals, who continue awake.---Some are squandering, Pearls, shall I say, or Kingdoms? No; but what is unspeakably more precious, Time. Squandering this inestimable Talent, with the most senseless and wanton Prodigality. Not content with allowing a *few spare Minutes*, for the Purpose of necessary Recreation; they lavish many Hours, devote *whole Nights*, to that idle Diversion of *shuffling, ranging, and detaching*, a Set of painted Pasteboards.---Others, instead of this busy Trifling, act the Part of their own Tormentors. They even piquet themselves*, and call it Amusement; they are torn by wild Horses, and yet term it a Sport. What else is the *Gamesier's* Practice, while his Mind is held in the most *anxious Suspense*, and agitated by the *fiercest Extremes* of Hope and Fear? While the Dice are rattling, his Heart is throbbing; his Fortune is tottering; and, possibly, at the very next Throw, the one sinks in the Gulph of Ruin, the other is hurried into the Rage of Distraction.

* In Allusion to a very painful Punishment, inflicted on Delinquents among the Soldiery.

SOME,

SOME, snatched from the Bloom of Health, and the Lap of Plenty, are confined to the *Chamber of Sickness*. Where they are constrained (O sad Alternative !) either to plunge into the everlasting World, in an *unprepared Condition* ; or else, to think over all the *Follies* of a heedless Life, and all the *Bitterness* of approaching Death. The Disease rages ; it baffles the Force of Medicine ; and urges the reluctant Wretch, to the Brink of the Precipice. While Furies rouse the Conscience, and point at the bottomless Pit below. ---Perhaps, his *drooping Mother*, deprived long ago of the Husband of her Bosom, and bereft of all her other Offspring ; is, even now, receiving the Blow which consummates her Misfortunes *. In vain, she

* This brings to my Mind one of the deepest and most affecting *Mourning-Pieces*, extant in Writing. The sacred Historian paints it in all the Simplicity of Style ; and yet in all the Strength of Colouring.—When JESUS came nigh to the Gate of the City, behold ! there was a dead Man carried out, the only Son of his Mother, and she was a Widow.—What a beautiful Gradation is here ? Every fresh Circumstance, is an additional Aggravation of the Calamity : Till, at length, the Description is worked up into the most finished Picture, of exquisite and inconsolable Distress.—He was a *young Man* : cut off in the Flower of Life, amidst a Thousand gay Expectations, and smiling Hopes. He was an *only Son* ; the afflicted Mother's All : So that none remained to preserve the Name, or perpetuate the Family. And, what rendered the Case
tries

74 CONTEMPLATIONS

tries to assuage the Sorrows of a beloved Son; in vain, she attempts, with her tender Offices, to prolong a Life, dearer than her own. He faints in her Arms; he bows his Head; he drops in Death. The last Pang, which dislodges the unwilling Soul, rends an *only Child*, from the yearning Embraces of a Parent; and tears away the Support of her Age, from a disconsolate Widow.

WHILE *Those* long for a Reprieve; *Others* invite the Stroke. Quite weary of the World, with a restless Impatience, they sigh for Dissolution. Some, pining away under the *tedious Decays* of an incurable *Consumption*; or gasping for Breath, and almost suffocated, amidst an *Inundation* of *dropscical Waters*. On some, a *relentless Cancer* has fastened its envenomed Teeth; and is gnawing them, though in the midst of bodily Vigour, in the midst of pitying Friends, gradually to Death. Others, are on a Rack of Agonies, by *convulsive Fits* of

still more deplorable, *She was a Widow*: left intirely desolate; abandoned to her Woes, without any to share her Sorrows, or comfort her under her Misfortunes.—Is not this a fine Sketch of the *Picturesque*? Who can consider the Narrative, with any Attention; and not feel his Heart penetrated, with a tender Commiseration? *Luke vii. 12.*

the

the *Stone* : Oh, how the Pain writhes their Limbs ; how the Sweat bedews their Flesh ; and their Eye-balls wildly roll ! Methinks, the Night condole with these her distressed Children ; and sheds *dewy Tears*, over their sorrowful Abodes.---But, of all Mortals, *They* are the most exquisitely miserable, who groan beneath the Pressure, of a *melancholy Mind* ; or smart under the Lashes, of a *resentful Conscience*. Though robed in Ermine ; or covered with Jewels ; the State of a Slave chained to the Gallies, or of an Exile condemned to the Mines, is a perfect Paradise compared with theirs.

O ! that the *Votaries* of *Mirth* ; whose Life is a continued Round of Merriment and Whim ; would bestow one serious Reflection, on this *Variety* of human *Woes* ! It might render them less enamoured, with the few languid Sweets ; that are thinly scattered through this Vale of Tears, and are environed with such a Multitude of ragged Thorns. It might teach them, no longer to dance away their Years, with a giddy *rambling Impulse* ; but to aspire, with a *determined Aim*, after those happy Regions, where Delights, abundant and un-embittered, flow.

76 CONTEMPLATIONS

CAN there be Circumstances, which a Man of Wisdom would more earnestly deprecate, than these several Cases of grievous Tribulation? There are; and, what is very astonishing, they are frequently the Desire and the Choice of Those, who fancy themselves the sole Heirs of Happiness: Those I mean, who are launching out into the *Depths* of *Extravagance*, and running excessive *Lengths* of *Riot*: who are prostituting their Reputation, and sacrificing their Peace, to their Lusts: who are sapping the Foundations of their Health, in Debaucheries; and shipwrecking the Interests of their Families, in their Bowls: and, what is worse, are forfeiting the Joys of an *eternal Heaven*, for the *sordid* Satisfaction of the Beast; for the *transitory* Sensations of an Hour.—O ye Slaves of Appetite, how far am I from envying your inordinate Revels! Ah! little are you sensible; that while Voluptuousness showers her Roses, and Luxury diffuses her Odours; they scatter *Poisons* also, and shed unheeded *Bane* *. Evils, incomparably more malignant, than the Wormwood and

* Yes; in the Flow'rs that wreathe the sparkling Bowl,

Fell Adders hiss, and pois'nous Serpents roll.

PRIOR'S *Sol.*

Gall

Gall of the sharpest Affliction.---Since Death is in the Drunkard's Cup; and worse than Poniards in the Harlot's Embrace; may it ever be the Privilege of the Man whom I love, to go without his Share of these *pestilent Sweets* *!

ABUNDANCE of *living Sparks* glitter in the Lanes, and twinkle under the Hedges. I suppose they are the *Glow-worms*; which have lighted their little Lamps, and obtained Leave, through the Absence of the Sun, to play a feeble Beam. A faint Glimmer, just serves to render them perceivable; without tending at all to dissipate the Shades, or making any Amends for the departed Day. ---Should a Traveller, dropping with Wet, and shivering with Cold, hover round this *Mimicry of Fire*; in order to dry his Garments, and warm his benumbed Limbs: Should some unfortunate Rover; groping for his Way, in a black and dark Night; take one of these *languid Tapers*, as a Light

* *Quam suave est suavitatibus istis carere!*—In this fine Sentence quoted from St. *Augustine*, there is much the same beautiful Turn, and noble Sentiment, as in those Lines of Mr. *Pope*.

Count all th' Advantage prosp'rous Vice attains,
'Tis but what Virtue flies from, and disdains.

to

78 CONTEMPLATIONS

to his Feet, and a Lantern to his Paths : How certainly would both the one, and the other, be frustrated of their Expectation!— And are *They* more likely to succeed, who, neglecting that sovereign Balm, which distilled from the Cross; fly to any *carnal Diversion*; to heal the Anxiety of the Mind? Who, deaf to the infallible Decisions of Revelation; resign themselves over to the erroneous *Conjectures* of *Reason*, in order to find the Way that leadeth unto Life? Or lastly, who apply to the *Froth* of this vain World, for a satisfactory Portion, and a substantial Happiness? Their Conduct is in no Degree wiser; their Disappointment equally sure; and their Miscarriage infinitely more disastrous. To speak in the delicate Language of a sacred Writer, “ They sow the Wind; “ and will reap the Whirlwind*.”

To say the Truth; the Pleasures of the World, which we are *All* so prone to dote upon; and the Powers of fallen Reason, which *Some* are so apt to idolize†; are not

* Hof. viii. 7.

† I hope, it will be observed, That I am far from decrying that noble Faculty of Reason, when exerted in her proper Sphere; and acting in a *deferential Subordination* to the revealed Will of Heaven. While She exercises her

only

only vain, but treacherous. Not only a *painted Flame*, like these sparkling Animals; but much like those *unctuous Exhalations*, which arise from the marshy Ground, and often dance before the Eyes of the benighted Wayfaring Man. Kindled into a sort of Fire, they personate a Guide, and seem to offer their Service: but, blazing with *delusive Light*, mislead their Follower into hidden Pits, headlong Precipices, and unfathomable Gulphs; where, far from his beloved Friends, far from all Hopes of Succour, the unhappy Wanderer is swallowed up, and lost.

Powers, within these appointed Limits, She is unspeakably serviceable; and cannot be too industriously cultivated.—But, when She sets up herself in *proud Contradistinction* to the sacred Oracles; when, all-arrogant and self-sufficient, She says to the Word of Scripture, *I have no Need of Thee*: She is then, I must be bold to maintain, not only a Glow-worm, but an *Ignis fatuus*; not only a Bubble, but a Snare.

May not this Remark, with the strictest Propriety; and without the least Limitation; be applied to the *Generality* of our modern Romances, Novels, and *too many* of our theatrical Entertainments? These are commonly calculated, to inflame a wanton Fancy: or, if conducted with so much Modesty, as not to debauch the Affections; they pervert the Judgment, and bewilder the Taste. By their incredible Adventures; their extravagant Parade of Gallantry; and their Characters, widely different from Truth and Nature; they inspire foolish Conceits: beget idle Expectations: introduce a Disgust of genuine History; and indispose their Admirers, to acquiesce in the *decent* Civilities, or to relish the *sober* Satisfactions, of common Life.

80 CONTEMPLATIONS

Not long ago, we observed a very surprising Appearance in the Western Sky. A *prodigious Star* took it's flaming Route through those Coasts; and trailed, as it passed, a tremendous Length of Fires, almost over half the Heavens. Some, I imagine, viewed the portentous Stranger, with much the same anxious Amazement; as *Belshazzar* beheld the Hand-writing upon the Wall. Some looked upon it as a *bloody* * *Flag*; hung out by Divine Resentment, over a guilty World. Some read, in it's glaring Visage, the Fate of Nations, and the Fall of Kingdoms †. To others, it shook, or seemed to shake, *Pestilence* and *War* from it's horrid Hair.---For my Part; I am not so superstitious as to regard, what every Astrologer has to prognosticate; upon the Accession of a *Comet*, or the awful Projection of it's huge *vapoury Train*. Nothing can be more precarious and unjustifiable, than to draw such Conclusions from such Events: Since they are neither *preternatural* Effects, nor do they throw the Frame of

* ——— *Liquida si quando nocte cometæ*
Sanguinei lugubre rubent. ——— VIRG.

† ——— *Crinemque timendi*
Sideris, & terris mutantem regna cometem.
LUCAN.

Things into any *Disorder*. I would rather adore that omnipotent Being, who rolled those stupendous Orbs from his creating Hand; and leads them, by his providential Eye, through unmeasurable Tracts of Æther: Who bids them, now, approach the Sun, and glow with unsufferable Ardours*; now, retreat to the utmost Bounds of our Planetary System, and make their Entry among other Worlds.

THEY are harmless Visitants. I acquit them from the Charge of causing, or being accessory to, desolating Plagues. Would to God there were no other more formidable Indications, of *approaching Judgments*, or *impending Ruin*! But, alas! when Vice becomes predominant, and Irreligion almost epidemical: when the Sabbaths of a jealous God, are notoriously profaned; and that “Name, which is great, wonderful, and “holy,” is prostituted to the meanest, or

* “The Comet in the Year 1680, according to Sir “*Isaac Newton*’s Computation, was, in it’s nearest Approach, above 166 times nearer the Sun than the “Earth is. Consequently, it’s Heat was then 28000 “times greater than that of Summer. So that a Ball of “Iron as big as the Earth, heated by it, would hardly “become cool in 50000 Years.” *Derb. Astr. Theol.* p. 237.

82 CONTEMPLATIONS

abused to the most execrable Purposes: when the Worship of the great Creator and Preserver of Mankind is banished, from many of the most *conspicuous Families*; and it is deemed a Piece of rude Impertinence, so much as to mention the gracious Redeemer, in our *genteel Interviews*: when it passes for an elegant Freedom of Behaviour, to ridicule the Mysteries of Christianity; and a Species of refined Conversation, to taint the Air with lascivious Hints: when those, that sit in the *Scorner's Chair*, sin with a high Hand; and many of those that wear the *Professor's Garb*, are destitute of the Power, and content themselves with the mere Form of Godliness: when such is the State of a Community, there is Reason, too apparent Reason, to be horribly afraid. Such *Phænomena*, abounding in the *moral World*, are not fanciful, but real Omens. Will not an injured God “be avenged on such a Nation “as this?” Will He not be provoked, to “sweep them with the Besom of Destruction*?”

* *Isa. xiv. 23.* The Eternal Sovereign, speaking of *Babylon*, denounces this Threatening, *I will sweep it with the Besom of Destruction.*—What a noble, but dreadful Image, is here! How strongly and awfully pourtrayed! How pregnant also in it's Signification! Intimating at once

O!

Q! that the Inhabitants of *Great Britain*, would lay these alarming Considerations to Heart! The LORD of Hosts has commanded the Sword of *civil Discord*, to return into it's Sheath: But have we returned, every one from his *evil Ways*? Are we become a renewed People; devoted to a dying Saviour; and zealous of good Works?---What mean those *Peals of Sobs*, which burst from the *expiring Cattle*?---What mean those melancholy Moans, where the lusty Drovers were wont to low*? What mean those Arrows of untimely Death, discharged on our innocent and useful Animals? Are not these the Weapons of Divine Displeasure, and manifest Chastisements of a sinful Generation†? Has not GOD, the "GOD to whom Vengeance belongeth," still a Controversy with

the *vile Nature*, the *total Extirpation*, of this wicked People; and the *perfect Ease*, with which the righteous GOD would execute his intended Vengeance.

* If these Papers should be so fortunate, as to outlive their Author; perhaps, it may be needful to inform Posterity, that the above-mentioned Hints, allude to a most terrible, contagious, and mortal *Distemper*; raging at the Time of writing them, among the *horned Cattle*, in various Parts of the Kingdom.

† *Hinc lætis vituli vulgo moriuntur in herbis,
Et dulces animas plena ad præsepia reddunt.
Balatu hinc pecorum, & crebris mugitibus amnes,
Arentesque sonant ripæ, collesque supini.* VIRO.

84 CONTEMPLATIONS

our Land? And who can tell, where the Visitation will end? What a Storm may follow these prelusive Drops? O! that we may “hear the Rod, and who hath appointed it!” Taught by these *penal Effects* of our Disobedience, may we remove the *accursed Thing* *, from our Tents; our Practices; our Hearts! May we turn from all Ungodliness, before Wrath come upon us to the uttermost; before Iniquity prove our Ruin!

SOMETIMES, at this Hour, another most remarkable Sight amuses the Curious, and alarms the Vulgar. A Blaze of lambent Meteors is kindled; or some very extraordinary *Lights* are refracted; *in the Quarters* of the *North*. Sometimes, the radiant Streamers meet and *minge*; infomuch, that the Air seems to be all conflicting Fire: At other times, they *start* from one another, and, like Legions in precipitate Flight, sweep, each a separate Way, through the Firmament. Now, they are *quiescent*; anon, they are thrown into a *quivering* Motion; presently, a nimble Glance diffuses them over the whole Hemisphere. Sometimes, with

* Josh. vi. 18.

an Aspect *awfully ludicrous*, they represent extravagant and antic Vagaries; at other times, you would suspect, that some invisible Power was playing off the *Artillery* of the *Skies*, and giving us the Flash, without the Noise,

THE Villagers gaze at the Spectacle, first with Wonder, then with Horror. A general *Panic* seizes the Country. Every Heart throbs, and every Face is pale. The Crouds that flock together, instead of diminishing, increase the Dread. They catch Contagion, from each other's Looks and Words; while Fear is in every Eye, and every Tongue speaks the Language of Terror. Some see *hideous Shapes*, Armies mixing in fierce Encounter, or Fields swimming with Blood. Some foresee *direful Events*, States overthrown, or mighty Monarchs tottering on their Thrones. Others, scared with still more frightful Apprehensions, think of nothing but the *Day of Doom*. "Sure, says one, " the unalterable Hour is struck, and the " End of all Things come.---See, replies " another, how the blasted Stars look wan! " Are not these the Signs of the Son of " Man, coming in the Clouds of Heaven? " ---JESUS prepare us (cries a Third, and

86 CONTEMPLATIONS

“ lifts his Eyes in Devotion) for the Arch-
 “ angel’s Trump, and the great Tribu-
 “ nal!”

IF this *waving Brightness*, which plays in-
 nocently over our Heads, be so amazing to
 Multitudes; what inexpressible Consterna-
 tion must overwhelm unthinking Mortals,
 when the *general Conflagration* commences!
 The Day, the dreadful Day is approaching,
 “ *In the which the Heavens shall pass away*
 “ *with a great Noise**, and the Element shall
 “ *melt with fervent Heat; the Earth also, and*

* 2 Pet. iii. 10. I have often thought this Verse an
 eminent Instance of that kind of beautiful Writing, in
 which the very *Sound* bears a sort of *Significancy*; at least,
 carries an exact Correspondence with the Sense. The
 original Expression—*ποιζήσθων*—is one of the hoardest and
 deepest Words in Language. Nothing could be more
 exquisitely adapted to affect the *Ear*, as well as impress
 the *Imagination*, with the Wreck of Nature, and the Crash
 of a falling World.—I scarce ever read this Clause, but
 it brings to my Mind that admired Description in *Milton*.

————— On a sudden open fly,
 With impetuous Recoil, and jarring Sound,
 Th’ infernal Doors, and on their Hinges grate
 Harsh Thunder. ————— Book II. l. 879.

It is a pleasing Employ, and one of the noblest Offices of
 true Criticism, to point out these inferior Recommenda-
 tions of the *Sacred Classics*. Though, I believe, the in-
 spired Writers themselves, amidst all the Elevation and
 Magnificence of their Divine Ideas, disdained a scrupu-
 lous Attention to such *little Niceties* of Style.

“ *all*

“ *all the Works that are therein, shall be burnt up.*” That mighty Hand, which once opened the Windows from on High, and broke up the Fountains of the great Deep, will then unlock all the *Magazines of Fire*, and pour a *Second Deluge* upon the whole Earth. The vengeful Flames, kindled by the Breath of the Almighty, spread themselves from the Centre to the Circumference. Nothing can withstand their Impetuosity ; nothing can escape their Rage. Universal Desolation attends their Progress. Magnificent Palaces, and solemn Temples, are laid in Ashes. Spacious Cities, and impregnable Towers, are mingled in one smoking Mass. Not only the Productions of *human Art*, but the Works of *Almighty Power*, are Fuel for the devouring Element. The everlasting Mountains melt, like the Snows which cover their Summit. Even vast Oceans, serve only to augment the inconceivable Rapidity and Fury of the Blaze.— O! how shall I, or others, stand undismayed amidst the Glare of a *burning World*; unless the LORD JEHOVAH be our Defence? How shall we be upheld in Security, when the Globe itself is sinking in a *fiery Ruin*; unless the Rock of Ages be our Support?

88 CONTEMPLATIONS

BEHOLD! a new Spectacle of Wonder! The *Moon* is making her Entry into the Sky. See her rising in *clouded Majesty*: All grand and stately, but somewhat fullied in her Aspect. However, she *brightens*, as she *advances*; and grows clearer, as she climbs higher: Till, at length, her Silver loses all its Dross; she unveils her peerless Light; and becomes “the Beauty of Heaven, the “Glory of the Stars*,” delighting every Eye, and chearing the whole World, with the Brightness of her Appearance, and the Softness of her Splendors.---O! thou *Queen of the Shades*! may it be my Ambition, to follow this thy instructive Example! While others are fond to transcribe the *Fashions of little Courts*, and to mimic Personages of inferior State; be it mine, to imitate *thy improving Purity*! May my Conduct become more unblemished, and my Temper more refined; as I proceed farther and farther, in my probationary Course! May every sordid Desire wear away, and every irregular Appetite be gradually lost; as I make nearer Approaches, to the celestial Mansions! Will not this be a comfortable Evidence,

* Ecclus. xliii. 9.

— *Lucidum cæli decus.*

HOR.

that

that I too shall shine, in my adored Redeemer's Kingdom? Shine, with a *richer* Lustre, than that which radiates from thy resplendent Orb: shine, with an *unfading* Lustre, when every Ray, that beams from thy beauteous Sphere, is totally extinguished?

THE Day afforded us a Variety of entertaining Sight. These were all withdrawn, at the Approach of Darkness. The Stars, kindly officious, immediately lent us their Aid. This served to *alleviate* the *Frown* of Night; not to *recover* the Objects, from their *Obscurity*. A faint Ray, scarcely reflected, and not from the intire Surface of Things, gave the straining Eye a very imperfect Glimpse; such as rather mocked, than satisfied Vision.---But, now the Moon is risen, and has collected all her Beams, the Veil is again taken off from the Countenance of Nature. We once again behold the World's great Picture; not indeed in it's late lively Colours, but more *delicately shaded*, and arrayed in *softer Charms* *.

* ——— Now reigns

Full orb'd the Moon, and with more pleasing Light
Shadowy sets off the Face of Things.— MILT.

WHAT

90 CONTEMPLATIONS

WHAT a majestic Scene is here! How incomparably grand, and exquisitely fine!--The Moon, like an immense crystal Lamp, pendent in the magnificent Cieling of the Heavens. The Stars, like so many Thousands of golden Tapers, fixed in their azure Sockets; all pouring their Lustre on spacious Cities, and lofty Mountains; glittering on the Ocean; gleaming on the Forest; and opening a Prospect, wide as the Eye can glance, more various than Fancy can paint*.---We are forward to admire the Performances of human Art. A Landscape, elegantly designed, and sketched out

* *As when the Moon, refulgent Lamp of Night;
O'er Heav'n's clear Azure spreads her sacred Light;
When not a Breath disturbs the deep Serene,
And not a Cloud o'ercasts the solemn Scene;
Around her Throne the vivid Planets roll,
And Stars unnumber'd gild the glowing Pole;
O'er the dark Trees a yellower Verdure shed,
And tip with Silver ev'ry Mountain's Head;
Then shine the Vales; the Rocks in Prospect rise;
A Flood of Glory bursts from all the Skies;
The conscious Swains, rejoicing in the Sight,
Eye the blue Vault, and bless the useful Light.*

Iliad. VIII.

I transcribe these Lines, because Mr. Pope says, They exhibit, in the Original, the finest Night-Piece in Poetry. And, if they are so beautiful in Homer's Language; who can suspect their suffering any Disadvantage, from the Pen of his admirable Translator?

with

with a masterly Hand ; a Piece of Statuary, that seems, amidst all the Recommendations of exact Proportion, and graceful Attitude, to soften into Flesh, and almost breathe with Life ; these little *Imitations* of Nature, we behold with a pleasing Surprise. And shall we be less affected, less delighted, with the inexpressibly noble, and completely finished *Original* !---The ample Dimensions of *Ranelagh's* Dome ; the gay Illuminations of *Vaux-Hall* Grove ; I should scorn to mention on such an Occasion, were they not the Objects of general Admiration. Shall we be charmed with those *puny Essays*, of finite Ingenuity ; and touched with no Transport, at this *stupendous Display* of Omnipotent Skill ? at the august Grandeur, and shining Stateliness, of the Firmament ? that forms an Alcove for Ten thousand Worlds, and is ornamented with Myriads of everlasting Luminaries.---Surely, this must betray, not only a total *Want* of *Religion* ; but the most abject Littleness of Mind, and the utmost *Poverty* of *Genius*.

THE Moon, is not merely “ an Ornament
“ in the high Places of the LORD ;” but of
signal *Service* to the Inhabitants of the
Earth.---How uncomfortable is deep, pitchy,
total

total Darkneſs! eſpecially, in the long Abſence of the Winter's Sun. Welcome therefore, thrice welcome, this auſpicious Gift of Providence; to enliven the nocturnal Gloom, and line with Silver the raven-coloured Mantle of Night!—How deſirable to have our Summer-Evenings illuminated! that we may be able to tread the dewy Meads, and breathe the delicious Fragrancy of our Gardens: eſpecially, when the ſultry Heats render it irkſome and fatiguing, to walk abroad by Day.—How chearing to the *Shepherd*, the Uſe of this univerſal Lantern; as He tends his fleecy Charge, or late conſigns them to their hurdled Cots! How pleaſing to the *Mariner*, as he plows the Midnight Main; to adjust the Tackling, and explore his Way, under the Influence of this beaming Sconce!—For theſe, and other beneficial Purpoſes, the Hand of the ALMIGHTY has hung the *ſtately Branch* on high; and filled it with a Splendor, not confined to a ſingle Edifice, or commensurate to a particular Square, but diffuſive as the whole Extent of the Hemisphere.

THE moſt faithful of our inferior Servants, are ſometimes tardy in their Office; ſometimes negligent of their Duty: but
this

this celestial Attendant is most *exactly punctual*, at all the stated Periods of her Ministration. If we chuse to prolong our Journey, after the Sun is gone down ; the Moon, during her whole *Increase*, is always ready to act in the Capacity of a Guide. If we are inclined to set out very early in the Morning ; the Moon, in her *Decrease*, prevents the Dawn, in order to offer her Assistance. And, because it is so pleasant a Thing, for the Eyes to behold the Light ; the Moon, at her *Full*, by a Course of un-intermitted Waiting, never fails to give Us, as it were, a double Day.---How apparently has the Divine Wisdom interested itself, in providing even for the *pleasurable Accommodation* of Man ! How desirous, that He should want no Piece of commodious Furniture ; no Kind of delightful Convenience ! And, in Prosecution of these benevolent Intentions, has annexed so valuable an Appendage to the terrestrial Globe.---Justly, therefore, does the Psalmist celebrate that admirable Constitution, which ordained *the Moon and the Stars to govern the Night*, as an Instance of rich Goodness ; *of Mercy which endureth for ever* *.

* Psal. cxxxvi. 9.

94 CONTEMPLATIONS

THE Moon, it is confessed, is *no luminous Body*. All the Brightness, which beautifies her Countenance, is originally in the Sun, and no more than transmissively in her. That glorious Orb is the Parent of Day, and the Palace of Light. From thence, the Morning-Star gilds her Horn*; from thence, the Planetary Circles are crowned with Lustre; and from thence, the Moon derives all her Silver Radiance. --It is pleasing to reflect, that such is the Case with the *all-sufficient Redeemer*, and his *dependent People*. We are replenished from his Fulness. What do we possess, which we have not received; and what can we desire, which we may not expect; from that never-failing Source of all Good? He is the Author of our Faith, and the Former of our Graces. In his unspotted Life, we see the Path; in his meritorious Death, the Price; and in his triumphant Resurrection, the Proof of Bliss and Immortality. If we offend, and fall Seven

* I might, to justify this Expression, observe, that the Planet *Venus*, commonly called the Morning-Star, is found, by our Telescopes, frequently to appear *horned*; or to have a *Crescent* of Light, somewhat like the Moon, a little before or after her Conjunction. But this would be a Remark, too deep and refined for my Scheme; which proceeds only upon a *superficial* Knowledge, and the most *obvious* Appearances, of Nature.

times a Day ; He is the LORD our *Peace**,
 If we are depraved, and our best Deeds very
 unworthy ; He is the LORD our *Righteous-*
ness †. If we are blind, and even brutish,
 in heavenly Knowledge ; He is the LORD
 our *Wisdom* ‡ : his Word dispels the Shades ;
 his Spirit scatters the intellectual Gloom ;
 his Eye looks our Darkness into Day. In
 short, we are nothing, and “ CHRIST is all.”
Worse than defective in ourselves, “ we are
 “ *complete* in Him.” So that if we shine, it
 is with delegated Rays, and borrowed Light.
 We act by a Strength, and glory in Merits,
 not our own.---O ! may we be thoroughly
 sensible of our Dependence on the Saviour !
 May we constantly imbibe his propitious
 Beams ; and never, by *indulging Unbelief*, or
backsliding into Folly, withdraw our Souls
 from his benign Influences ! Lest we lose
 our Comfort, and our Holiness ; as the fair
 Ruler of the Night loses her Splendor, when
 her Urn is turned from it's Fountain ||, and
 receives no more Communications of solar
 Effulgence.

* Judg. vi. 24. † Jer. xxiii. 6. ‡ 1 Cor. i. 30.

|| Alluding to those truly poetical Lines in *Milton*,

Hither, as to their Fountain, other Stars
 Repairing, in their golden Urns draw Light.

Par. Lost, B. VII. l. 364.

96 CONTEMPLATIONS

THE Moon is incessantly *varying*, either in her Aspect, or her Stages.---Sometimes, her Face is all Lustre. Anon, a radiant Crescent adorns her Brow. Soon, it dwindles into a slender Streak. Till, at length, all her Beauty vanishes, and she becomes a beamless Orb.---Sometimes, she rises with the *descending Day*; and begins her Procession, amidst admiring Multitudes. Ere long, she defers her Progress till the *midnight Watches*; and steals, unobserved, upon the sleeping World.---Sometimes, she just appears, on the *Edges* of the Western *Horizon*; and drops us a ceremonious Visit. Within a while, she sets out on her nightly Tour, from the opposite Regions of the East; *traverses* the whole *Hemisphere*; and never offers to withdraw, till the more resplendent Partner of her Sway renders her Presence unnecessary.---In a Word, she is, while conversant among us, still waxing or waning, and “ never continueth in one “ Stay.”

SUCH is the Moon; and such are all *sub-lunary Things*; exposed to perpetual Vicissitudes---How often, and how soon, have the faint Echoes of *Renown* slept in Silence, or been converted into the Clamours of Obloquy!

quy ! The same Lips, almost with the same Breath, cry Hosanna, and Crucify.---Have not *Riches* confessed their notorious Uncertainty, a Thousand and a Thousand times ? Either melting away, like Snow in our Hands, by insensible Degrees ; or escaping, like a winged Prisoner from it's Cage, with a precipitate Flight.---Have we not known the *Bridegroom's Closet*, an *Antechamber* to the *Tomb* ; and heard the Voice, that so lately pronounced the sparkling Pair Husband and Wife, proclaim an everlasting Divorce ; and seal the Decree with that solemn Asseveration, " Ashes " to Ashes, Dust to Dust ?"---Our *Friends*, though the Medicine of Life ; our *Health*, though the Balm of Nature ; are a most precarious Possession. How soon may the one become a Corpse in our Arms ; and how easily is the other destroyed in it's Vigour !---You have seen, no doubt, a Set of pretty *painted Birds*, perching on your Trees, or sporting in your Meadows. You was pleased with the lovely Visitants, that brought Beauty on their Wings, and Melody in their Throats. But could you *ensure* the *Continuance* of this agreeable Entertainment ? No, truly : At the least disturbing Noise, at the least terrifying Appearance, they start from

98 CONTEMPLATIONS

their Seats ; they mount the Skies ; and are gone in an Instant, gone for ever. Would you choose to have a Happiness, which bears Date with their Arrival, and expires at their Departure ? If you could not be content with a Portion, that is settled only for such a *fortuitous Term*, not of Years, but of Moments, O ! take up with nothing earthly ; set your Affections on Things above ; there alone is “ no Variableness or Shadow of “ turning.”

JOB, is not a more illustrious Pattern of Patience, than an eminent Exemplification of this Remark.---View him in his *private Estate*, he heaps up Silver as the Dust ; he washes his Steps in Butter ; and the Rock pours him out Rivers of Oil.---View him in his *public Character*, Princes revere his Dignity ; the Aged listen to his Wisdom ; every Eye beholds him with Delight ; every Tongue loads him with Blessings.---View him in his *domestic Circumstances*, on one hand, he is defended by a Troop of Sons ; on the other, adorned with a Train of Daughters ; and on all Sides, surrounded by “ a very great Household.”---Never was human Felicity so consummate ; never was *disastrous Revolution* so sudden.

The

The Lightning, which consumed his Cattle, was not more terrible, and scarce more instantaneous. The joyful Parent is bereft of his Offspring, and his "Children are buried "in Death." The Man of Affluence is stript of his Abundance; and he, that was cloathed in Scarlet, embraces the Dunghil. The venerable Patriarch is the Derision of Scoundrels; and the late Darling of an indulgent Providence, is become "a Brother to Dragons, a Companion of Owls."---Nor need we go back to former Ages, for Proofs of this afflicting Truth. In our Times; in all Times; the Wheel continues the same incessant Whirl: and frequently those, who are *triumphing*, To-day, in the highest *Elevations* of Joy; To-morrow, are bemoaning the Instability of mortal Affairs, in the very *Depths* of Misery *.---Amidst so much Fluctuation

* I believe, I may venture to apply, what the *Temnite* says of the Affairs of the Wicked, to all *sublunary Things*; as a true Description, of their very *great Instability*. *Job* xxii. 16. נהר יוצק יסודם rendered by *Schultens*, *Flumen fusum fundamentum eorum*. *Their Foundation* (or what they reckon their most solid and stable Possession) *is a Flood poured out*.----Which is one of the *boldest Images*, and most *poetical Beauties*, I ever met with in any Language, sacred or profane. In order to have a tolerable Conception of the Image, and a Taste of it's Beauty; you must suppose a *Torrent* of Waters rushing in broken Cataracts, and with impetuous Rapidity, from a

100 CONTEMPLATIONS

and Uncertainty; how wretched is the Condition, which has no Anchor of the Soul, sure and steadfast? May thy Loving-kindness, O God, be our present Treasure; and thy future Glory, our reversionary Inheritance! Then shall our Happiness not be like the full-orbed Moon, which is “a Light that *decreaseth* in it’s Perfection;” but like the Sun, when he goeth forth in his Strength, and knoweth no other Change, but that of *shining more* and more unto the perfect Day.

METHINKS, in this ever-varying Sphere, I see a Representation, not only of our temporal Advantages, but also of our *spiritual Accomplishments*. Such, I am sure, is what the kind Partiality of a Friend would call my *Righteousness*: And such I am apt to suspect *, is the Righteousness of every Man

steep and craggy Mountain. Then, imagine to yourself an *Edifice*, built upon the Surge of this rolling Precipice; that has no other *Basis* than one of those *whirling Waves*, which constitute such a headlong Stream.—Was there ever such a Representation of transitory Prosperity, tending, with inconceivable Swiftneſs, unto Ruin? Yet such is every Form of human Felicity, that is not grounded upon JESUS, and a Participation of his Merits, who is the *Rock of Ages*; on JESUS, and his Image formed in our Hearts, which is the *Hope of Glory*.

* I would not be understood, as measuring, in this respect, *others by myself*; but as taking my Estimate, from
 living.

living. Now we exercise it, in some few Instances ; in some little Degrees. Anon, Sin revives, and leads our Souls into a transient, though unwilling Captivity. Now we are *meek* ; but soon a ruffling Accident intervenes, and turns our Composure into a fretful Disquietude. Now we are *humble* ; soon we reflect upon some inconsiderable or imaginary Superiority over others, and a sudden Elatement swells our Minds. Now, perhaps, we possess a *clean Heart*, and are

the unerring Standard of Scripture. And indeed, proceeding on this Evidence, supported by this Authority, I might have ventured farther than a bare *Suspicion*. For, “ there is not a *just* Man upon Earth, that doth Good, “ and *sinneth not* ;” says the Spirit of Inspiration by *Solomon* (*Eccles.* vii. 20.)---Nay, such is the Purity, and so extensive are the Demands, of the Divine Law, that an Apostle makes a still more humbling Acknowledgement, “ In *many* Things we offend *All*” (*1 Jam.* iii. 2.)---And the *all-wise Teacher*, who most thoroughly knew our Frame, directs the most advanced, most established, and most watchful Christians, to pray daily for the Forgiveness of their *daily Trespases*.---To which Testimonies, I beg Leave to add an elegant Passage from the *Canticles* ; because, it not only expresses the Sentiment of this Paragraph, but illustrates it by the very same Similitude. *She* (the Church) *is fair as the Moon ; clear as the Sun*. Fair as the Moon, the lesser and changeable Light, in her *Sanctification* : Clear as the Sun, the greater and invariable Luminary, in her *Justification*. The inherent Holiness of Believers being imperfect, and subject to many Inequalities ; while their imputed Obedience is every way complete, and constantly like itself. *Cant.* vi. 10.

warm with *holy Love* : But, O ! how easily is the Purity of our Affections sullied ; how soon the Fervor of our Gratitude cooled ! And is there not something amiss, even in our best Moments ? Something to be *ashamed* of, in all we *are* ; something to be *repented* of, in all we *do* ?

WITH what Gladness, therefore, and adoring Gratitude, should we “ submit to “ the Righteousness of our incarnate God ; ” and *receive*, as a Divine Gift, what cannot be *acquired* by Human Works * !---A Writer, of the first Distinction, and nicest Discernment, styles the Obedience of our glorious Surety, an *everlasting Righteousness* †. Such as was subject to no Interruption, nor obscured by the least Blemish ; but proceeded always in the same uniform Tenour, of the most spotless Perfection.---This Righteousness, in another Sense, answers the Prophet’s noble Description ; as it’s beneficial and sovereign Efficacy knows no End ; but lasts through all our Life ; lasts in the trying Hour of Death ; lasts at the decisive Day of Judgment ; lasts through every Generation ; and will last to all Eternity.

* Rom. v. 17. — x. 3.

† Dan. ix. 24.

SOMETIMES, I have seen that resplendent Globe *stript* of her *Radiance*; or, according to the emphatical Language of Scripture, “turned into Blood.” The Earth, interposing with it’s opake Body, intercepted the solar Rays, and cast it’s own gloomy Shadow, on the Moon. The malignant Influence gained upon her sickening Orb; extinguished, more and more, the Remainers of Light; till, at length, like one in a *deep Swoon*, no Comeliness was left in her Countenance; she was totally *overspread* with *Darkness*.---At this Juncture, what a Multitude of Eyes were gazing upon the rueful Spectacle! Even of those Eyes, which disregarded the Empress of the Night; or beheld her with Indifference; when, robed in Glory, and riding in her triumphal Chariot, she shed a softer Day through the Nations. But now, under these Circumstances of Disgrace, they watch her Motions with the most *prying Attention*; in every Place, her Misfortune is the Object of general Observation; and the prevailing Topic of Discourse, in every Company.

Is it not thus, with regard to *Persons* of *Eminence*, in their respective Spheres! Kings, at the Head of their Subjects; Nobles, sur-

rounded with their Dependents ; and (after Names of so much Grandeur, may I be allowed to add ?) Ministers, in their Parishes* ; are each in a conspicuous Station. Their Behaviour, in it's *minuteſt* Step, eſpecially in any *Miſcarriage*, will be narrowly ſurveyed, and critically ſcanned. Can there be a louder Call, to ponder the Paths of their Feet, and to be particularly jealous over all their Ways ? --- Thoſe, that move in inferior Life, may groſſly offend ; and little Alarm be given ; perhaps, no Notice taken. But it is not to be expected, that the leaſt Slip in their Conduct, the leaſt Flaw in their Character, will paſs undiscovered. *Malice*, with her *Eagle-Eyes*, will be ſure to diſcern them ; while *Cenſure*, with her *ſhrill Trumpet*, will be as far from concealing them ; as *Calumny*, with her *treacherous Whiſpers*, from extenuating them. A Planet may ſink below the Horizon ; or a Star, for ſeveral Months, withdraw it's Shining ; and ſcarce one in Ten thouſand perceive the Loſs. But, if the Moon ſuffers a tranſient Eclipse, almoſt half the World are Spectators of her Diſhonour.

* Ye are the Light of the World. A City that is ſet on an Hill, cannot be hid. *Matth. v. 14.*

VERY different was the Case, when, at this late Hour, I have taken a solitary Walk on the *Western Cliffs*. At the Foot of the steep Mountain, the Sea, all clear and smooth, spread itself into an immense Plain, and held a watry Mirror to the Skies. Infinite Heights above, the Firmament stretched it's azure Expanse; bespangled with unnumbered Stars, and adorned with the Moon, "walking in Brightness*." She seemed to contemplate herself, with a peculiar Pleasure; while the *transparent Surface*, both received, and returned, her *Silver Image*. Here, instead of being covered with Sack-cloth, she shone with double Lustre; or rather, with a Lustre multiplied, in proportion to the Number of Beholders, and their various Situations.

SUCH, methinks, is the Effect of an exemplary Behaviour, in Persons of exalted Rank. Their Course, as it is nobly *distinguished*, so it will be happily *influential*. Others, will catch the diffusive Ray; and be ambitious to resemble a Pattern, so attracting; so commanding. Their amiable Qualities, will not *terminate* in themselves: but we shall see them *reflected* from their

* Job xxxi. 26.

106 C O N T E M P L A T I O N S

Families ; their Acquaintance ; their Retainers. Just as we may now behold another Moon ; trembling in the Stream ; glittering in the Canal ; and displaying it's lovely Impress, on every Collection of Waters,

THE Moon, Philosophy says, is a sort of *Sovereign* over the *great Deep*. Her Orb, like a Royal Sceptre, sways the Ocean, and actuates the fluid Realms. It swells the Tides, and perpetuates the reciprocal Returns of Ebb and Flow. By which means, the liquid Element purges off it's Filth ; and is preserved, from being putrefied itself, and from poisoning the World.---Is the Moon thus *operative* on the vast Abyss ? And shall not the *Faith* of eternal and infinite Delights to come, be equally efficacious on this Soul of mine ?---Far above her argent Fields, are Treasures of *Happiness*, unseen by mortal Eye ; by mortal Ear unheard ; and unconceived by any human Imagination. In that desirable World, the most distinguished *Honours* also are conferred ; in Comparison with which, the Thrones and Diadems of earthly Monarchs, are empty Pageants, and childish Toys. Yonder Arch of Sapphire, with all it's Spangles of Gold, is but the Floor of
those

those Divine Abodes. What then are the Apartments ; what is the Palace ? How bright with Glories ; how rich with Blifs ?

O! YE Mansions of Blessedness ; ye Beauties of my Father's Kingdom ; that far outshine these Lamps of the visible Heaven ; transmit your sweet and winning Invitations to my Heart. *Attract*, and *refine*, all my Affections. With-hold them from *stagnating*, on the fordid Shores of Flesh ; never suffer them to settle upon the Lees of Sense ; but impress them with *Emotions* of restless *Desire*, after sublime and celestial Joys.---Joys, that will proceed on in one everlasting Flow, when Seas shall cease to roll:---Joys, that will charm every Faculty with unimaginable Pleasure ; when the Moon, with her waxing Splendors, shall chear our Sight no more.

ENOUGH for the present Evening. My Thoughts have been sufficiently exercised, and my Steps begin to be attended with Weariness. Let me obey the Admonition of Nature ; and give Respite to my Meditations, Slumber to my Eyes.---But stay.---Shall I retire to the Bed of Sleep, with as little Ceremony, and with as much Inattention, as the Brutes to their fordid
Lair ?

108 CONTEMPLATIONS

Lair? Are no *Acknowledgements* due to that Divine Being, who has been the Support of my Life, and the Length of my Days? Have I no farther Need of his *protecting* Care; no more Occasion for the Blessings of his Goodness?---*Lepidus*, perhaps, may laugh at the bended Knee; and have a thousand Darts of Rallery, ready to be discharged on the Practice of Devotion. The Wits, I know, are unmercifully severe on, what *they* call, the Drudgery of Prayer, and the fantastical Rant of Praise. These they leave to the illiterate Labourer, and mean Mechanic; or treat them, with a contemptuous Sneer, as the Parson's ignoble Trade.

Is it then an Instance of *superstitious* Blindness, to distinguish; or of *whimsical* Zeal, to celebrate; the most super-eminent Merits? Is it an *ungraceful* Business; or does it argue a *groveling* Disposition; to magnify Goodness, transcendently rich and diffusive? Is it only for the *inferior Herd*, to admire the most consummate Excellence; only for *pusillanimous* Creatures, to maintain an Affiance on Almighty Power?---What can be so truly becoming a *dependent State*, as to pay our adoring Homage, to the Fountain of Perfection; and profess our devoted Allegiance,

legiance, to the supreme Governor of the Universe? Can any thing more significantly bespeak an *ingenuous Temper*; or administer a more real Satisfaction to it's finest Feelings; than the Exercises of penitential Piety? by which we give Vent to an honest Anguish; or melt into filial Sorrow; for our Insensibility to the best of Friends, for our Disobedience to the best of Parents?---In a Word; can there be a more *sublime Pleasure*, than to dwell, in fixed Contemplation, on the Beauties of the Eternal Mind; the amiable Author of all that is fair, grand, and harmonious; the beneficent Giver of all that is convenient, comfortable, and useful? Can there be a more *advantageous Employ*, than to present our Requests to the Father of Mercies; opening our Minds to the Irradiations of his Wisdom, and all the Faculties of our Souls to the Communications of his Grace?---It is strange, unaccountably strange, that the Notion of *Dignity* in Sentiment, and the Pursuit of *refined Enjoyment*, should ever be disunited from *Devotion*. That Persons, who make Pretensions to an improved Taste, and exalted Genius, should neglect this most ennobling Intercourse, with the wisest and best of Beings; the inexhaustible Spring of Honour and Joy.

SHALL

SHALL I be deterred, from
 this Source of the purest Light,
 from pursuing this highest Good,
 my Nature? Deterred from
midable Banter; or confused
fragable Smile?---No: let me
 resplendent Sphere; and
 all it's starry Train; with
 Even or Morn. If I refuse
 my Heart, and breathe forth
 reasonable Incense of Praise
 great and glorious God,
 Earth, and built the Skies
 from his Hand the world
 breathed the all-surrounding
 " Thou also madest the Moon
 " nipotent! and Thou, thou
 " though less than the least
 " cies, have passed in Satisfaction
 " and Comfort.---When
 " Extravagance of Dream
 " in the Insensibility of Sleep
 " recovered me from the tedious
 " and strung my *Limbs* with
 " gour: thy Hand set a
 " fine Edge, on all my business
 " awakened my *Thoughts*,
 " into Alacrity; reduced
 " concerted, into Order:

EMPLATIONS

deterred, from approaching
the purest Delight? Deterred,
from his highest Improvement of
deterred from all, by a *for-*
or confuted, by one *irre-*
--No : let the Moon, in her
re ; and yonder Pole, with
ain ; witness, if I be silent

If I refrain to kindle in
breathe from my Lips, the
se of Praise. Praise to that
ous GOD, who formed the
t the Skies ; who poured
l the watry World, and
-surrounding Air abroad.---
dest the Night, Maker Om-
l Thou, the Day ! which I,
an the least of all thy Mer-
sed in Safety, Tranquillity,
---When I was lost in the
of Dreams, or lay immersed
bility of Sleep ; thy Hand
from the temporary Lethargy,
y *Limbs* with recruited Vi-
and set a new, a delicately
all my blunted *Senses* : and
Thoughts, when benumbed,
; reduced them, when dis-
to Order : resetting me, at
“ once,

ON THE NIGHT

" once, to discharge the Duty
 " tion ; to relish the innocents
 " ments of an *animal*, and to
 " lime Gratifications of a *ra*
 " ---When Darkneſs covered
 " the Creation, at thy Command
 " aroſe, and darted it's Beams
 " Flowers, and diſtinguiſhed
 " gave Light to my *Feet*, gave
 " my *Hands*, and gave Nature
 " beautiful Scenes, to my Eyes
 " O Thou God of my Life,
 " *tinuance* of my Being, and
 " my Conſtitution. By thy
 " without any Conſciouſneſs
 " Wheels of Nature move
 " the vital Fountain plays.
 " Power, the crimſon Current
 " innumerable Channels ; and
 " miſſes it's Way ; never once
 " in it's Courſe ; when a ſm
 " might be Diſeaſe ; or the
 " ſingle Artery, Death. O
 " exquisite *Skill*, it tranſforms
 " the nicest Operations of
 " kind of Chemistry, into a
 " fineſt Secretions : which
 " Muſcles, and ſwell them
 " pour themſelves into the

the Duties of my Sta-
the innocent Entertain-
al, and to enjoy the sub-
ns of a *rational* Capacity.
efs covered the Face of
thy Command, the *Sun*
l it's Beams; painted the
tinguished every Object;
Feet, gave Direction to
gave Nature, with all her
to my *Eye*.---To Thee,
my Life, I owe the *Con-*
Being, and the *Vivacity* of
By thy sacred Order,
nsciousness of mine, the
re move within me, and
n plays. *Impelled* by thy
on Current flows through
annels; and never once
never once is interrupted
when a small Obstruction,
e; or the Bursting of a
eath. *Over-ruled* by thy
it transforms itself, by
ations of an inexplicable
ry, into a Variety of the
: which glide into the
vell them for Action; or
into the Fluids, and re-
“ pair

112 CONTEMPLATIONS

“ pair their incessant Decays : which cause
 “ Chearfulness to sparkle in the Eye, and
 “ Health to bloom in the Cheek.

“ *DISASTROUS Accidents*, injurious
 “ to the Peace of my Mind ; or fatal to the
 “ Welfare of my Body ; beset my Paths, in
 “ formidable Ambush. But thy Faithful-
 “ ness, and Truth, like an impenetrable
 “ Shield, covered my Head, and guarded
 “ me all around. Under this divine Pro-
 “ tection, I walked secure, amidst Legions
 “ of *apparent* Perils ; and passed unhurt,
 “ through a Multiplicity of *unseen* Evils. Not
 “ one of my Bones was broken ; nor a
 “ single Shaft grazed upon my Ease ; even
 “ when the Eye that watched over me, saw,
 “ in it's wide Survey, *Thousands falling beside*
 “ *me*, in irrecoverable Ruin ; and *Ten thou-*
 “ *sands* deeply wounded by the Arrows, that
 “ flew *on my Right-hand*.---If *Sickness* has, at
 “ any time, visited my Chamber, or *Pain*
 “ harrowed my Flesh ; it was a *wholsome*
 “ Discipline, and a *gracious* Severity. The
 “ Chastisement proved a sovereign Me-
 “ dicine, to cure me of an immoderate
 “ Fondness, for this imperfect troublesome
 “ State ; and to quicken my Desires, after
 “ the unimbittered Enjoyments of Eternity.
 “ ---Has

“ ---Has not thy Munificence, unwearied
 “ and unbounded, spread my *Table*; and
 “ furnished it with the finest Wheat: re-
 “ plenished it, with *Marrow* and *Fatness*?
 “ While Temperance sweetened the Bowl;
 “ Appetite seasoned the Dish; Content-
 “ ment and Gratitude crowned the Repast.
 “ ---Has not thy Kindness, O GOD of the
 “ Families of *Israel*, preserved my affec-
 “ tionate *Relations*; who study, by their
 “ tender Offices, to soften every Care, and
 “ heighten every Joy? And given me va-
 “ luable *Friends*, whose Presence is a Cordial,
 “ to cheer me in a dejected Hour; and
 “ whose Conversation, mingles Improvement
 “ with Delight?

“ WHEN *Sin* lay lurking, amidst flowery
 “ Scenes of Pleasure; enlightened by thy
 “ Wisdom, I *discerned* the latent Mischief;
 “ made resolute by thy Grace, I *shunned* the
 “ luscious Bane. If, through the Impulse
 “ of Sensuality, or the Violence of Passion,
 “ I have been hurried into the Snare, and
 “ stung by the Serpent; thy faithful Admo-
 “ nitions, have *recalled* the foolish Wan-
 “ derer; while the Blood of thy Son, has
 “ *healed* his deadly Wounds. Some, per-
 “ haps, have been cut off in the Midst of
 VOL. II. I “ their

114 CONTEMPLATIONS

“ their Iniquities ; and, to their inexpres-
 “ sible Astonishment, transmitted from the
 “ Thrillings of polluted Joy, to the Agonies
 “ of eternal Despair. Whereas, I have
 “ been distinguished by long-suffering Mer-
 “ cy ; and, instead of lifting up my Eyes,
 “ in Torments, to behold a Heaven irre-
 “ coverably lost ; I may lift them up under
 “ the pleasing Views of being admitted,
 “ ere long, into those Abodes of unutter-
 “ able Felicity.---In the mean time, Thou
 “ hast vouchsafed me the *Revelation* of thy
 “ Will ; the Influences of thy *Spirit* ; and
 “ Abundance of the most effectual *Aids*,
 “ for advancing in Knowledge, and grow-
 “ ing in Godliness : for becoming more
 “ conformable to thy Image, and more
 “ meet for thy Presence : for tasting the
 “ sacred Pleasures of Religion, and securing
 “ the unfearchable Riches of Heaven.

“ How various is thy Beneficence, O
 “ Thou Lover of Souls ! It has unsealed a
 “ thousand Sources of Good ; opened a
 “ thousand Avenues of Delight ; and heaped
 “ Blessings upon me, with a ceaseless Libe-
 “ rality. If I should attempt to declare
 “ them ; they would be more than the
 “ *Stars*, which glitter in this unclouded
 “ Sky ;

“ Sky; more than the *dewy* Gems, which
“ will adorn the Face of the Morning.

“ AND shall I *forget* the GOD of my
“ Salvation, the Author of all my Mercies?
“ Rather let my Pulse forget to beat!---
“ Shall I render Him *no Expressions* of Thank-
“ fulness? Then might all Nature reproach
“ my Ingratitude.---Shall I rest satisfied with
“ the *bare Acknowledgement* of my Lips? No:
“ let my *Life* be *vocal*, and speak his Praise,
“ in that only genuine, that most emphati-
“ cal Language---the Language of devout
“ Obedience. Let the *Bill* be drawn upon
“ my very Heart; let all my Affections
“ *acknowledge* the Draught; and let the
“ whole Tenour of my Actions, in Time,
“ and through Eternity, be continually
“ *paying* the Debt---the mighty Debt of
“ Duty, Veneration, and Love.

“ AND can I, O Thou Guide of my
“ Goings, and Guardian of all my Interests
“ ---can I *distrust* such signal, such experi-
“ enced Goodness? *Thou hast been my Helper*,
“ through all the busy Scenes of Day:
“ *therefore, under the Shadow of thy Wings* will
“ I repose myself, during the Darkness, the
“ Danger, and Death-like Inactivity, of
I 2 “ the

116 CONTEMPLATIONS, &c.

“ the Night. Whatever Defilement I have
“ contracted, wash it thoroughly away, in
“ redeeming Blood ; and let neither the
“ sinful Stain, nor the sinful Inclination,
“ accompany me to my Couch!--Then,
“ shall *I lay me down in Peace, and take my*
“ *Rest* ; chearfully referring it to thy all-
“ wise Determination, whether I shall open
“ my Eyes in *this* World, or awake in the
“ unknown Regions of *another*.”

The E N D.

CONTEMPLATIONS

ON THE

STARRY HEAVENS.

*There dwells a noble Pathos in the Skies,
Which warms our Passions, proselytes our Hearts :
How eloquently shines the glowing Pole !
With what Authority it gives it's Charge,
Remonstrating great Truths in Stile sublime !*

Night-Thoughts, N° IX.

230

231



T H E C O N T E N T S.

WALK on the Summit of a Hill.—The advancing Night withdraws the rural Prospect; opens the Beauties of the Sky, 126—Fragrance of the blooming Beans, 127—The Heavens, a most noble Field for the Display of the Divine Perfections, 128—Folly of Judicial Astrology; the right Use of contemplating the Stars, 129—A Sketch of the most remarkable Discoveries of our modern Astronomy, 131—Religion, and necessary Business; Religion, and innocent Pleasure; as consistent, as the annual and diurnal Motions of the Earth, 134—The Sun, it's enormous Size, 137—The Stars, the Centres of Systems; their inconceivable Distance, 139—Other Skies furnished with other Stars, 140—The Greatness of the Creator, 141—The preceding Observations inculcate Humility, 143—Shew the Littleness of terrestrial Things, 143—The stupendous Condescension of GOD, in his gracious Regards to the Children of Men, 146—The prodigious Heinousness of human Guilt,

CXX THE CONTENTS.

150—*The Richness of CHRIST's Atonement, and it's complete Sufficiency for the most deplorable Cases of Sin and Misery, 153—The Power of GOD manifested in the Starry Heavens; this the Christian's constant Safeguard, and sure Resource, 158—The miserable Condition of the Ungodly, who have Omnipotence for their Enemy, 164—The unwearied Patience of this mighty Being, 166—The Wisdom of GOD, displayed in the Skies; what abundant Reason, to practise a chearful Submission to all his Dispensations; even when they seem most frowning and afflictive; all spring from Love, and will terminate in Good, 168—The Goodness of GOD, diffused through the vast System of material Things, and animated Creatures; but most illustriously exemplified in the Work of Redemption; the former View gives a most amiable, the latter a perfectly ravishing, Idea of the divine Beneficence, 175—The Purity of GOD, faintly represented by the unspotted Firmament: the Defilement of sinful Man; the immaculate Excellence of his Surety, 185—The unmeasurable Dimensions of the Sky; the greater Extent of the Divine Bounty and Mercy; the last of those Subjects, being so peculiarly comfortable to Sinners, enlarged on, 190—What sustains the Arch of Heaven, and supports the Globes it contains; the same invisible Hand upholds the Christian in his Course,*

THE CONTENTS. CXXI

*Course, 201—The Faithfulness of GOD portrayed, in the Stability of the heavenly Bodies, and Perpetuity of their Motions; the Unreasonableness of our Unbelief; Motives to an assured Faith, 206—Various Attributes of the Divine Nature, appear, with a glimmering Light, in the celestial Luminaries; all shine forth, with the fullest Lustre, in CHRIST JESUS, 211—The Dignity of Prayer, and Happiness of having GOD for our Portion, 203—The horrible Ingratitude, and destructive Perverseness, of living without GOD in the World, 218—All the rolling Worlds on high, punctually obedient to their Maker's Orders; are a Pattern, in this respect, and a Provocative to the rational Creation, 226—The gradual Appearance of Stars; and progressive State of a true Conversion, 232—The Multitude of Stars; especially in the Galaxy; the more attentively surveyed, the greater Number discovered; on the most strict Inspection, appear no larger than glittering Points; this applied to the unsearchable Treasures of Wisdom in the Scriptures, of Merit in CHRIST, of Bliss in Heaven, 234—The celestial Bodies disposed in such a Manner, as to be delightful and serviceable to Man; adorn his Abode, and measure his Time; a silent Admonition this, to improve the Talent, 238—Brightness of the Stars; Encouragement to Fidelity in
the*

cxxii THE CONTENTS.

the Ministerial Office, 241---Polar Star; it's invariable Situation; Guide to the antient Mariners; such the Word of GOD to our Souls; Persuasive to attend it's unerring Dictates, 242—Variety in the Magnitude, and Splendor, of the Stars; different Degrees in the World of Glory; yet all the Blessed completely happy, 245—Projection and Attraction, the grand Principles that actuate the Planetary System; Faith and Love bear much the same Proportion, in the Oeconomy of Christianity, 247—The admirable Effects, and extensive Influences, of Attraction; the Agency of the HOLY GHOST on the human Mind, 251—Vast Gradation in the Scale of universal Existence; all are Objects of the Divine Care, and full of the Divine Presence, 255—The surpassing Worth of an immortal Soul; a Solitude for its final Welfare urged, 262—An unthinking View of the Skies is affecting; much more a rational and devout one, 266—The Scantiness of our Knowledge, with regard to the celestial Bodies; after all our Search, they are Objects of Admiration, rather than of Science; Exhortation to such Pursuits, as are of easy Attainment, and will be of everlasting Advantage, 267—Short Recapitulation of the Whole; and an Hymn of Praise, suited to the sublime Occasion, 270.

N. B.

THE CONTENTS. cxxiii

N. B. It may seem unaccountable to an *unlearned* Reader, that Astronomers should speak such *amazing* Things; and speak them with such an Air of *Assurance*; concerning the Distances and Magnitudes, the Motions and Relations, of the Heavenly Bodies. But the *Exactness*, with which ECLIPSES are calculated; the Instant of their *Beginning*, and Time of their *Continuance*, assigned; assigned, almost to the *Nicety* of a Moment; and, what is still more surprising, for the Space of *Hundreds* or *Thousands* of Years to come: — As this is a Matter of *Fact*, absolutely indisputable; it is also a very obvious, yet solid *Demonstration*, that the Principles of Science, on which those Calculations proceed, are not mere Conjecture, or precarious Supposition only; but have a *real*, a *certain* Foundation, in the Nature and Constitution of Things.

CON.





CONTEMPLATIONS

ON THE

STARRY HEAVENS.

THIS Evening, I exchange the nice Retreats of Art, for the noble Theatre of Nature. Instead of *measuring* my Steps, under the *Covert* of an Arbour; let me *range* along the *Summit*, of this gently rising Hill.—There is no Need of the leafy Shade, since the Sun has quitted the Horizon, and withdrawn his scorching Beams. But see, how Advantages and Inconveniencies are usually linked, and chequer our Affairs below! If the *annoying Heat* ceases, the *Landscape*, and it's pleasing Scenes, are also removed.—The majestic Castle, and the lowly Cottage, are vanished together. I have lost the aspiring Mountain, and it's russet Brow; I look round, but to no purpose, for the humble
Vale,

126 CONTEMPLATIONS

Vale, and it's flowery Lap: The Plains, whitened with Flocks, and the Heath, yellow with Furze, disappear. The advancing Night, has wrapt in Darkneſs the long-extended Foreſt; and drawn her Mantle, over the Windings of the Silver Stream. I no longer behold that luxuriant Fertility in the Fields; that wild Magnificence of Proſpect, and endleſs Variety of Images; which have ſo often *touched* me with *Delight*, and *ſtruck* me with *Awe*, from this commanding Eminence.

THE Loſs, however, is ſcarcely to be regretted; ſince it is amply compensated, by the opening Beauties of the Sky. Here, I enjoy a free View of the whole Hemisphere; without any Obſtacle from below, to confine the exploring Eye; or any Cloud from above, to overcaſt the ſpacious Concave. 'Tis true, the lively Vermilion, which ſo lately ſtreaked the Chambers of the Weſt, is all faded: But the *Planets*, one after another, light up their Lamps; the *Stars* advance in their glittering Train; a Thouſand and a Thouſand Luminaries, ſhine forth in ſucceſſive Splendors; and the whole Firmament is kindling, into the moſt beautiful Glow. The *Bluenefs* of the *Æther*, heightened by
6 the

the Season of the Year, and still more enlivened by the *Absence* of the *Moon*, gives those Gems of Heaven the strongest Lustre.

ONE Pleasure more, the invading Gloom has not been able to snatch, from my Sense. The Night rather improves, than destroys, the Fragrance which exhales from the *blossoming Beans*. With these, the Sides of this sloping Declivity are lined; and with these, the balmy Zephyrs perfume their Wings. Does *Arabia*, from all her spicy Groves, breathe a more liberal, or a more charming Gale of Sweets? And, what is a peculiar Recommendation of the rural Entertainments, presented in our happy Land, they are alloyed by no Apprehensions of Danger. No poisonous Serpent, lurks under the Blossom; nor any ravenous Beast, lies ready to start from the Thicket.—But, I wander from a far more exalted Subject. My Thoughts, like my Affections, are too easily diverted from the Heavens, and detained by inferior Objects. Away, my Attention, from these little *Blandishments* of the *Earth*; since all the *Glories* of the *Sky* invite thy Regard.

WE have taken a Turn among the *Tombs*, and viewed the solemn Memorials of the Dead:
in

128 CONTEMPLATIONS

in order to learn the Vanity of mortal Things, and to break their soft Inchantment. ---We have surveyed the *Ornaments* of the *Garden*; not that the Heart might be planted in the Parterre, or take Root among the flowery Race: but that these Delicacies of a Day, might teach us to aspire after a better Paradise; where Beauty never fades, and Delight is ever in the Bloom.---A Third time we lighted the Candle of Meditation; and sought for Wisdom, not in the crouded City, or wrangling Schools, but in the silent and lonely *Walks* of ancient *Night**.---Let us once more indulge the contemplative Vein, and raise our Speculations to those *sublimier Works* of the great Creator; which the Regions of the Sky contain, and this dusky Hour unveils †.

IF we have discerned the Touches of his Pencil, glowing in the Colours of Spring; if we have seen a Sample of his Beneficence, exhibited in the Stores of Nature; and a

* Alluding to the several Subjects of the Three preceding Essays.

† Night opes the *noblest Scenes*, and sheds an Awe,
Which gives those venerable Scenes full Weight,
And deep Reception in th' entender'd Heart.

Night-Thoughts, N° IX.

Ray

Ray of his Brightness, beaming in the Blaze of Day; O! what an infinitely richer Field for the *Display* of his *Perfections*, are the Heavens! The *Heavens*, in the most emphatical Manner, declare the Glory of GOD. The Heavens are nobly eloquent of the Deity, and the most magnificent Heralds of their Maker's Praise. They speak to the whole Universe; for there is neither *Speech* so *barbarous*, but their Language is understood; nor *Nation* so *distant*, but their Voices are heard among them*.---Let me then, while Multitudes are buried in Sleep, listen to their silent Lectures. Perhaps, I may receive such impressive Manifestations of "the eternal Power and Godhead," as may shed *Religion* on my Soul, while I walk the solitary Shades; and may be a tutelary *Friend* to my *Virtue*, when the Call of Business, and the Return of Light, expose me again to the Inroads of Temptation.

THE *Israelites*, instigated by Phrensy rather than Devotion, worshiped the Host of Heaven. And the Pretenders to *Judicial Astrology* talk of, I know not what, mysterious Efficacy; in the different Aspect of

* Psal. xix. 3.

the Stars, or the various Conjunction and Opposition of the Planets.---Let those, who are unacquainted with the sure Word of Revelation, give ear to these Sons of Delusion, and Dealers in Deceit: For my Part, it is a Question of Indifference to me, whether the Constellations shone with Smiles, or loured in Frowns, on the Hour of my Nativity. Let CHRIST be my *Guard*; and, secure in such a Protection, I would laugh at their impotent Menaces. Let CHRIST be my *Guide*; and I shall scorn to ask, as well as despair of receiving, any predictive Information from such lifeless Masses.---What! shall “ the Living seek to the Dead*?” Can these Bodies advertise me of *future Events*, which are unconscious of their *own Existence*? Shall I have recourse to unintelligent, stupid Matter, when I may apply to that all-wise Being; who, with one comprehensive Glance, distinctly views whatever is lodged in the Bosom of Immensity, or forming in the Womb of Futurity?---Never will I search for any *Intimations* of my *Fate*; but often trace my *Creator's Footsteps* †, in yonder

* Isa. viii. 19.

† “ It is most becoming (says a great Author) such imperfect Creatures as we are, to contemplate the Works of GOD, with *this* Design, that we may dis-

starry Plains. In the former Case, they would be Teachers of Lies; in the latter, they are Oracles of Truth. In this therefore, this Sense only, I profess myself the Pupil of the Stars.

THE Vulgar, are apprehensive of nothing more, than a Multitude of *bright Spangles*, dropt over the æthereal Blue. They have no higher Notion of these fine Appearances; than that they are so many *golden Studs*, with which the Empyrean Arch is decorated: ---But studious Minds, that carry a more

“ cern the Manifestations of Wisdom in them; and
 “ thereby excite in ourselves those devout Affections, and
 “ that superlative Respect, which is the very Essence of
 “ Praise, as it is a reasonable and moral Service.” — *Aber-*
nethy on the Attributes.—And, indeed, if we are sincerely
 disposed to employ ourselves in this excellent, this delight-
 ful, Duty of praising the infinite Creator; the *Means*, and
 the *Motives*, are both at hand. His Works, in a won-
 derful and instructive Variety, present themselves; with
pregnant Manifestations of the most *transcendent* Excellen-
 cies of their Maker. They pour their Evidences from
 all Quarters, and into all the Avenues of the Mind.
 They invite us, especially in the magnificent System of
 the Universe, to contemplate—*Counsel*, consummately
 wise; and *Execution*, inimitably perfect:—*Power*, to
 which nothing is impossible; and *Goodness*, which ex-
 tendeth to All, which endureth for ever.—To give, not
 a full Display, but only some *slight Strictures*, of these
 glorious Truths, is the principal Scope of the following
 Remarks.

accurate and strict Inquiry among the celestial Bodies, bring back Advices of a most astonishing Import. Let me just recollect the most material of those *stupendous Discoveries*; in order to furnish out proper Subjects for our Contemplation. And let the Unlearned remember, That the Scene I am going to display, is the Workmanship of that incomprehensible GOD, who is "perfect in Knowledge, and mighty in Power:" Whose Name, whose Nature, and all whose Operations, are "great and marvellous:" Who summons into Being, with equal Ease, a single Grain, or Ten thousand Worlds.---To this if we continually advert, the Assertions, though they will certainly excite our *Admiration*, need not transcend our *Belief*.

THE Earth, is, in Fact, a *round* Body; however it may seem, in some Parts, to be sunk into *Vales*, and raised into *Hills* *; in

* A learned Writer, I think, Dr. *Derham*, has somewhere an Observation to this Purpose----That the loftiest *Summits* of Hills, and the most enormous *Ridges* of Mountains, are no real Objection to the *globular* Form of the Earth. Because, however they may render it, to our limited Sight, vastly uneven and protuberant; yet, they bear no more Proportion to the *intire Surface* of the terra-

other

other Parts, to be spread into a spacious *Plain*, extending to the Confines of the Heavens, or terminated by the Waters of the Ocean.---We may fancy, that it has deep *Foundations*, and rests upon some prodigiously solid Basis: But it is *pendent*, in the wide transpicious *Æther*; without any visible Cause, to uphold it from above, or support it from beneath.---It may seem to be *sedentary* in it's Attitude, and *motionless* in it's Situation: But it is continually *sailing**, through the Depths of the Sky; and in the Space of Twelve Months, finishes the mighty Voyage. Which periodical Rotation, produces the Seasons, and completes the Year.---As it proceeds in the annual Circuit, it *spins* upon it's own *Centre*; and turns it's Sides, alternately, to the Fountain of Light. By which means, the

queous Ball, than a *Particle* of *Dust*, casually dropt on the Mathematician's Globe, bears to it's whole Circumference. Consequently, the rotund Figure is no more destroyed in the one Case, than in the other.—On the same Principle, I have not thought it necessary, to take any Notice of the comparatively small Difference, between the *Polar* and *Equatorial* Diameter of the Earth.

* With what amazing *Speed*, this Vessel (if I may carry on the Allusion,) filled with a Multitude of Nations, and freighted with all their Possessions, makes her Way through the æthereal Space; see Page 161. in Note.

134 CONTEMPLATIONS

Day dawns in one Hemisphere ; while the *Night* succeeds in the other. Without this Expedient, one Part of it's Regions would, during half the great Revolution, be scorched with excessive Heat, or languish under an un-intermitted Glare : while the other, exposed to the contrary Extremes, would be frozen to Ice, and buried under a long Oppression of dismal and destructive Darkness.

I cannot forbear taking Notice ; that, in this compound Motion of the Earth, the one never *interferes* with the other, but both are perfectly *compatible*. Is it not thus, with the Precepts of Religion, and the needful Affairs of the present Life ; not excepting even the innocent Gratifications of our Appetites?---Some, I believe, are apt to imagine, that they must *renounce* Society, if they devote themselves to CHRIST ; and abandon all the Satisfaction of *this* World, if they once become zealous Candidates for the Felicity of *another*.---But this is a very mistaken Notion, or else a very injurious Representation, of the Doctrine which is according to Godliness. It was never intended to drive Men into Desarts ; but to lead them, through the peaceful and
pleasant

pleasant Paths of Wisdom, into the blissful Regions of Life eternal. It was never intended to strike off the Wheels of *Business*, or cut in sunder the Sinews of *Industry*; but rather, to make Men industrious from a Principle of *Conscience*, not from the Instigations of *Avarice*; that so, they may promote their immortal Happiness, even while they provide for their temporal Maintenance. It has no Design to extirpate our Passions, but only to restrain their Irregularities; neither would it damp the Delights of Sense, but prevent them from evaporating into Vanity, and subsiding into Gall.---A Person may be chearful among his Friends, and yet joyful in GOD. He may taste the Sweets of his earthly Estate; and, at the same time, cherish his Hopes of a nobler Inheritance in Heaven. The *Trader* may prosecute the Demands of Commerce, without neglecting to negotiate the Affairs of his Salvation. The *Warrior* may wear his Sword; may draw, in a just Cause, that murderous Weapon; and yet be a good Soldier of JESUS CHRIST, and obtain the Crown that fadeth not away. The *Parent* may lay up a competent Portion for his Children, and not forfeit his Title to the Treasures, either of Grace or Glory.---So far is Chri-

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stianity,

136 CONTEMPLATIONS

stianity, from obstructing any valuable Interest, or with-holding any real Pleasure; that it advances the one, and improves the other. Just as the *diurnal* and *annual* Motions, are so far from *clashing*, that they entirely *accord*; and, instead of being destructive of each other, by mutually blending their Effects, they give Proportion and Harmony to Time, Fertility and innumerable Benefits to Nature.

To Us, that dwell on it's Surface, the Earth is by far the *most extensive* Orb; that our Eyes can, any-where, behold. It is also cloathed with Verdure; *distinguished* by Trees; and adorned with a Variety of beautiful Decorations. Whereas, to a Spectator placed on one of the Planets, it wears an *uniform Aspect*; looks all luminous, and *no larger* than a Spot. To Beings, who dwell at still greater Distances, it intirely disappears.--- That which we call, alternately, the Morning, or the Evening-Star; as in one Part of her Orbit, she rides foremost in the Procession of Night; in the other, ushers in and anticipates the Dawn; is a *planetary World*. Which, with the four others, that so wonderfully vary their mystic Dance, are in themselves

themselves *dark* Bodies, and shine only by *Reflexion* : have Fields, and Seas, and Skies, of their own : are furnished with all Accommodations for *animal* Subsistence, and are supposed to be the Abodes of *intellectual* Life. All which, together with this our earthly Habitation, are dependent on that grand Dispenser of divine Munificence, the Sun ; receive their Light from the Distribution of his Rays, and derive their Comforts from his benign Agency.

THE *Sun*, that seems to perform it's daily Stages through the Sky, is, in this respect *, *fixed* and immoveable. 'Tis the great Axle of Heaven, about which the Globe we inhabit, and other more spacious Orbs, wheel their stated Courses.---The Sun, though seemingly *smaller* than the *Dial* it illuminates, is abundantly *larger* † than this whole *Earth* ; on which so many lofty Mountains rise, and such vast Oceans roll. A Line, extending from Side to Side, through the Centre of

* I say, *in this respect* ; that I may not seem to forget, or exclude, the Revolution of the Sun round it's own Axis.

† A hundred thousand times, according to the *lowest* Reckoning. Sir *Isaac Newton* computes the Sun to be 900,000 times bigger than the Earth.

Religious Philosopher, p. 749.

138 CONTEMPLATIONS

that resplendent Orb, would measure more than Eight hundred thousand Miles: a Girdle, formed to go round it's Circumference, would require a Length of Millions: and, were it's solid Contents to be computed, the Account would even confound our Understanding, and be almost beyond the Power of Language to express*.---Are we startled at these Reports of Philosophy? Are we ready to cry out, in a Transport of Surprize; How *mighty* is the *Being*, who kindled such a prodigious Fire; and keeps alive, from Age to Age, such an enormous Mass of Flame? ---Let us attend our philosophic Guides, and we shall be brought acquainted with Speculations, incomparably more enlarged and amazing.

THIS Sun, with all it's attendant Planets, is but a very little Part of the grand Ma-

* Dr. *Derham*, after having calculated the Dimensions of the Planets, adds, "Amazing as these Masses are, they are all far outdone by that stupendous Globe of Light, the Sun; which, as it is the Fountain of Light and Heat, to all the Planets about it, so doth it far surpass them all in it's Bulk: It's apparent Diameter being computed at 822,148 *English* Miles, it's Ambit at 2,582,873 Miles, and it's solid Contents at 290,971, 000,000,000,000."

Astro-Theol. Book I. Chap. II.

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chine of the Universe. Every *Star*, though, in Appearance, no bigger than the *Diamond*, that glitters upon a Lady's Ring; is really a *vast Globe*, like the Sun in Size, and in Glory; no less spacious, no less luminous, than the radiant Source of our Day. So that every Star is, not barely a World, but the *Centre* of a magnificent *System*; has a Retinue of Worlds, irradiated by it's Beams, and revolving round it's attractive Influence. All which are lost, to our Sight, in unmeasurable Wilds of *Æther*.---That the Stars appear like so many diminutive, and scarce distinguishable *Points*, is owing to their immense, and inconceivable *Distance*. Immense and inconceivable indeed it is; since a Ball, shot from the loaded Cannon, and flying with unabated Rapidity, must travel, at this impetuous Rate, almost Seven hundred thousand Years*, before it could reach the *nearest* of those twinkling Luminaries.

CAN any thing be more wonderful, than these Observations? Yes: There are *Truths*, far more *stupendous*; there are *Scenes*, far more *unbounded*. As there is no End of the

* See *Religious Philosopher*, p. 819.—Where the exact Computation is 691,600 Years.

Almighty

Almighty Maker's Greatness ; so no Imagination can set Limits to his creating Hand. ---Could you soar beyond the Moon, and pass through all the planetary Choir : could you wing your Way to the highest apparent Star, and take your Stand on one of those loftiest Pinacles of Heaven : you would, there, see *other Skies* expanded ; *another Sun*, distributing his inexhaustible Beams by Day ; *other Stars*, that gild the Horrors of the alternate Night : and *other* *, perhaps nobler *Systems*, established ; established, in unknown Profusion, through the boundless Dimensions of Space.---Nor does the Dominion of the universal Sovereign terminate *there*. Even at the End of this vast Tour, you will find yourself advanced no farther, than the *Suburbs* of Creation ; arrived only at the *Frontiers*, of the great JEHOVAH's Kingdom †.

* See *Astro-Theology*, Book II. Chap. II.—Where the Author, having assigned various Reasons to support this Theory of our *modern Astronomers*, adds—" Besides (the " fore-mentioned) strong Probabilities, we have this farther Recommendation of such an Account of the " Universe, that it is far *more* magnificent, and worthy " of the infinite *Creator*, than any other of the narrower " Schemes."

† *Job*, after a most sublime Dissertation, on the mighty Works of GOD ; as they are scattered through universal Nature, from the Heights of Heaven, to the very Depths of Hell ; closes the magnificent Account with this noble

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ARE we struck with Amazement, at this little *Sketch* of a very little *Part* of his Works? How then must we be lost in Wonder, at the Consideration of the *CREATOR himself*! Who is so high; that He looks down on the highest of these dazzling Spheres, and sees even the Summit of Creation in a Vale: so great, that this prodigious Extent of Space, is but a Point in his Presence; and all this *Confluence* of *Worlds*, as the *lightest Atom*, that fluctuates in Air, and disports in the meridian Ray*.

Acknowledgement; *Lo! these are Parts of his Ways*. Or, as the original Word more literally signifies; and may, I think, be more elegantly rendered; These are only the *Skirts*, the *very outermost Borders*, of his Works. No more than a small Preface to the immense Volume of the Creation—From the Hebrew קצות—*Extremities*—I cannot forbear thinking, on the *extreme* and very attenuated *Fibres* of the Root, when compared with the whole Substance of the *Trunk*; or on the *exquisitely small* Size of the *capillary Vessels*, when compared with the whole Structure of the Body. *Job xxvi. 14.*

* This puts me in mind of a very fine Remark on a *scriptural Beauty*; and a solid *Correction* of the common *Translation*; made by that learned, sagacious, and devout Expositor *Vitringa*.—*Isa. xl. 15.* We find it written of the Supreme Being, That *he taketh up the Isles as a very little Thing*. Which, our Critic observes, is neither answerable to the Import of the Original, nor consonant to the Structure of the Discourse. The Prophet had no Intention to inform Mankind, what the Almighty could do, with regard to the Islands, if he pleased to exert his Power: But his Design was to shew, how insignificant,

142 CONTEMPLATIONS

O! THOU sublime and incomprehensibly glorious GOD, how am I overwhelmed with Awe, and sunk into the lowest Prostration of Mind; when I consider thy “*excellent Greatness*,” and my own *Littleness*, my own *Insignificancy*!---Is there not most abundant Reason, to be even confounded at the Remembrance; that, excessively mean as I am, I should ever entertain one *conceited Apprehension* of myself? should feel the least Elatement of Thought, in the Presence of so majestic and adorable a Being?---Were I possessed of all the *high Perfections*, that accomplish and adorn the Angels of Light; yet, amidst all these noble Endowments, I would fall down in the *deepest Abasement* at thy Feet. Lost in the infinitely superior Blaze, of thy uncreated Glories; I would confess my-

or rather what mere Nothings *they are*, in his Esteem, and before his Majesty.—The Islands, says he, though so *spacious*, as to afford Room for the Erection of Kingdoms, and the Abode of Nations; though so *strong*, as to withstand, for many Thousands of Years, the raging and reiterated Assaults of the whole watry World; are yet, before the adored JEHOVAH, *small* as the minutest Grain, which the Eye can scarce discern; *light* as the feathered Mote, which the least Breath hurries away like a Tempest.—אֵיִם כְּדֶק יִטּוֹל *Insulæ sunt ut leve quid, quod avolat.* The deep-rooted Islands are as the volatile Atom, which, by the gentlest Undulations of the Air, is waisted to and fro in perpetual Agitation.

self,

self, to be less than Nothing, and Vanity.--- How much more ought I to maintain the most unfeigned Humiliation, before thy Divine Majesty; who am not only Dust and Ashes, but a Compound of Imperfection and Depravity!

WHILE, beholding this vast Expanse, I learn my own extreme Meanness; I would also discover the abject *Littleness*, which is in all *terrestrial Things*.---What is the Earth, with all her ostentatious Scenes, compared with this astonishing Furniture of the Skies? What, but a dim *Speck*, hardly perceivable in the *Map* of the *Universe*? It is observed, by a very judicious Writer*, That if the Sun himself, which enlightens this Part of the Creation, was extinguished; and all the Host of planetary Worlds, that move about him, were annihilated; they would not be missed, by an Eye that can take in the whole Compass of Nature, any more than a Grain of Sand upon the Sea Shore. The Bulk of which they consist, and the Space which they occupy, is so exceedingly little in comparison of the Whole; that their *Loss* would scarce leave a *Blank*, in the Immensity of

* Spect. Vol. VIII. N^o 565.

144 CONTEMPLATIONS

God's Works.---If then, not our Globe only, but this whole System, be so very diminutive; what is a Kingdom, or a County? What are a few *Lordships*, or the so much admired *Patrimonies* of those, who are stiled Wealthy*? When I measure them with my own little Pittance, they swell into enormous Dimensions. But, when I take the boundless Universe for my Standard, how scanty is their Size, how contemptible their Figure! They shrink into proud and pompous *Nothings*†.

WHEN the keen-eyed Eagle soars above all the feathered Race, and leaves their very Sight below: when she wings her towering Way up the Steep of Heaven; and, steadily gazing on the meridian Sun, accounts it's *beaming Splendors* all *her own*: Does she then regard, with any Solicitude, the *Mote* that is flying in the Air, or the *Dust* which she shook from her Feet? And shall this eternal Mind of mine, which is capable of contemplating it's Creator's Glory; which is intended to enjoy the Visions of his Countenance; shall this

* *Juvat inter sidera vagantem divitum pavimenta ridere,
& totam cum auro suo terram.* SENECA.

† *Terrellæ grandia inania.*

WATTS's Hor. Lyr.

eternal Mind, endued with such great Capacities, and made for such exalted Ends, be so *ignobly ambitious*, as to sigh for the Tinsels of State; or so *poorly covetous*, as to grasp after ample Territories on a Needle's Point?--- O! no: While such my Considerations, I feel my Sentiments expand, and my Wishes acquire a Turn of Sublimity. Such vast Surveys assimilate the Soul, and make her truly great. My throbbing Desires after worldly Grandeur, die away; and I find myself, if not possessed of Power, yet superior to it's Charms.---Too long, must I own, have my Affections been *pinioned* by Vanity, and *immured* in this earthly Clod. But these Thoughts break the *Shackles**: These Objects open the Door of *Liberty*: My Heart, fired by such noble Prospects, weighs Anchor from this little Nook; and coasts no longer about it's contracted Shores; dotes no longer on it's painted Shells. The *Immensity* of *Things*, is her Range; and an *Infinity* of *Bliss*, is her Aim.

- * The Soul of Man was made to walk the Skies,
 Delightful Outlet of her Prison here!
 There, disincumber'd from her Chains, the Ties
 Of Toys terrestrial, she can rove at large;
 There freely can respire, dilate, extend,
 In full Proportion let loose all her Powers.

Night-Thoughts, N^o. IX.

146 CONTEMPLATIONS

BEHOLD this immense Expanse, and admire the *Condescension* of thy GOD.—In this manner, an inspired and princely Astronomer, improved his Survey of the nocturnal Heavens. *When I consider thy Heavens, even the Works of thy Fingers, the Moon and the Stars which Thou hast ordained; I am smitten with Wonder at thy Glory, and cry out in a Transport of Gratitude, LORD, what is Man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the Son of Man, that Thou visitest him*?* “How
 “amazing, how charming, is that Divine
 “Grace, which is pleased to bow down it’s
 “*sacred Regards*, to so foolish and *worthless* a
 “*Creature!* Yea, disdains not, from the
 “Height of infinite Exaltation, to extend
 “it’s kind providential Care, to our most
 “minute Concerns!—But, that the Ever-
 “lasting Sovereign should give his Son, to
 “be our incarnate Saviour; what a Miracle
 “is this of condescending Goodness! Or
 “rather, What are all *Miracles*, what are
 “all *Mysteries*, to this *ineffable Gift!*”

HAD the *brightest Archangel* been commissioned to come down, with the Olive-Branch of Peace in his Hand; and to signify his Eternal Maker’s Readiness to be reconciled:

* Psal. viii. 3, 4.

on our bended Knees, with Tears of Joy, and a Torrent of Thankfulness, we ought to have received the transporting News. But when, instead of such an angelic Envoy, He sends His *only-begotten Son*; his Son beyond all Thought illustrious, to make us the gracious Overture:—sends Him from the “Habitation of his Holiness and Glory,” to put on all the innocent *Infirmities* of *Mortality*, and dwell in a Tabernacle of Clay:—sends Him, not barely to make us a *transient Visit*, but to abide *many Years* in our inferior and miserable World:—sends Him, not to exercise Dominion over Monarchs, but to wear out his *Life* in the ignoble Form of a *Servant*; and, at last, to make his Exit under the infamous Character of a *Malefactor*! Was ever Love like this? Did ever Grace stoop so low*?—Should the Sun be shorn

* This reminds me of a very noble Piece of *sacred Oratory*, where, in a fine Series of the most beautiful Gradations, the Apostle displays the admirably condescending Kindness of our Saviour.—*He thought it no Robbery*, it was his indisputable Right, *to be equal with the infinite, self-existent, immortal GOD*. Yet, in Mercy to Sinners, *He emptied himself* of the incommunicable Honours, and laid aside the Robes, of incomprehensible Glory.—When He entered upon His mediatorial State, instead of acting in the grand Capacity of universal So-

148 CONTEMPLATIONS

of all his radiant Honours, and degraded into a *Clod* of the Valleys; should all the Dignitaries of Heaven be deposed from their Thrones, and degenerate into *Insects* of a Day; *great, great* would be the Abasement. But *nothing* to Thine, most blessed JESUS; *nothing* to Thine, thou Prince of Peace; when for us Men, and for our Salvation, Thou didst not abhor the coarse Accommodations of the *Manger*; Thou didst not decline even the gloomy Horrors of the *Grave*.

vereign, He took upon him the Form of a Servant. And not the Form of those ministring Spirits, whose Duty is Dignity itself; who are throned, though adoring.—He took not on him the Nature of Angels, but stooped incomparably lower. Assumed a Body of animated Dust, and was made in the Likeness of Men; those inferior and depraved Creatures.—Astonishing Condescension! but not sufficient for the overflowing Richness of the Redeemer's Love. For, being found in Fashion as a Man, He humbled Himself farther still. Occupied the lowest Place, where all was low and ignoble. He not only submitted to the Yoke of the Divine Law, but also bore the Infirmities, and ministred to the Necessities, of Mortals. He even washed the Feet of others, and had not where to lay His own Head.—Yea, He carried His meritorious Humiliation, to the very deepest Degrees of possible Abasement. He became obedient unto Death.—And not to a common or natural Death, but a Death more infamous than the Gibbet; more torturous than the Rack;—even the accursed Death of the Cross. Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8.

'Tis

'Tis well, the sacred Oracles have given this Doctrine, the most reiterated and incontestable Evidence. Otherwise, so prodigious a Favour must stagger our Belief.--- Could HE, who *launches* all these planetary Globes, through the *illimitable* Void; and leads them on, from Age to Age, in their extensive Career; could HE resign his Hands, to be *confined* by the girding Cord; and his Back to be *plowed*, by the bloody Scourge? ---Could HE, who crowns all the Stars with inextinguishable *Brightness*; be Himself defiled with *Spitting*, and disfigured with the thorny Scar? It is the greatest of *Wonders*, and yet the surest of *Truths*.

O! YE mighty Orbs, that roll along the Spaces of the Sky; I wondered, a little while ago, at your vast Dimensions, and ample Circuits. But now my Amazement ceases; or rather, is intirely swallowed up by a much more stupendous Subject. Methinks, your *enormous Bulk* is shrivelled to an *Atom*; your *prodigious Revolutions* are contracted to a *Span*; while I muse upon the far more elevated Heights, and unfathomable Depths; the infinitely more extended Lengths, and unlimited Breadths,

150 CONTEMPLATIONS

of this *Love of GOD in CHRIST JESUS**.

WHILE I behold this vast Expanse, I see a Mirror, that represents, in the most awful Colours, the Greatness of the Creator's Glory, and the *Heinousness* of human *Guilt*, ---*Ten thousand Volumes* ; wrote on purpose, to display the Aggravations of my various Acts of Disobedience ; could not so effectually convince me of their inconceivable Enormity, as the Consideration of that *all-glorious Person* † ; who, to make an Atonement for them, spilt the last Drop of his Blood.---*I have sinned*, may every Child of Adam say ; and *what shall I do unto Thee, O Thou Observer of Men* ‡ ? Shall I give my First-born for my Transgression, the Fruit of my Body for the Sin of my Soul ? Vain Commutation ! and such as would be re-

* Eph. iii. 18, 19.

† *Quo quisque altius ascendit in agnitione CHRISTI, eo profundius peccati atrocitatem cognoscet.*

‡ *Job vii. 20.* Not *Preserver*, as it stands in our Version, but *Observer of Men*. Which Phrase, as it expresses the strict and incessant *Inspection* of the divine Eye ; as it intimates the absolute Impossibility, that any Transgression should *escape* the divine Notice ; is evidently most proper, both to assign the *Reason*, and heighten the *Emphasis*, of the Context.

jected

jected by the blessed GOD, with the utmost Abhorrence.---Will all the *Potentates*, that sway the Sceptre in a Thousand Kingdoms, devote their sacred and honoured Lives, to rescue an obnoxious Creature from the Stroke of Vengeance? Alas! it must cost more, vastly more, to expiate the Malignity of Sin, and save a guilty Wretch from Hell.---Will all the *Principalities* of Heaven be content to assume my Nature, and resign themselves to Death for my Pardon *? Even

* *Milton* sets this Thought, in a very poetical and striking Light.---All the Sanctities of Heaven, stand round the Throne of the Supreme Majesty. GOD foresees and foretels the *Fall of Man*; the *Ruin*, which will unavoidably ensue on his Transgression; and the utter *Impossibility*, of his being ever able to *extricate himself*, from the Abyss of Misery.

He, with his whole Posterity, must die;
Die he, or Justice must; unless for Him
Some Other able, and as willing, pay
The rigid Satisfaction, Death for Death.

After which affecting Representation, intended to raise the most tender Emotions of Pity; the following Inquiry is addressed to all the surrounding Angels;

Say, heav'nly Pow'rs, where shall we find such Love?
Which of you will be mortal, to redeem
Man's mortal Crime? and die, the Dead to save?
He ask'd; but all the heav'nly Choir stood mute,
And Silence was in Heav'n. -----

There is, to me at least, an inimitable Spirit and Beauty in the last Circumstance.----That such an innumerable

this, would be too mean a Satisfaction, for inexorable Justice; too scanty a Reparation, of God's injured Honour. So flagrant is human Guilt, that nothing, but a *Victim* of *infinite Dignity*, could constitute an adequate Propitiation.---*He* who said, "Let there be Light, and there was Light;" Let there be a Firmament, and immediately the blue Curtains floated in the Sky; *He* must take Flesh; *HE* must feel the fierce Torments of Crucifixion; and pour out his Soul in Agonies, if ever such Transgressors are pardoned.

How vast is that Debt; which all the Wealth of both the *Indies* cannot discharge! How vitiated that Habit of Body; which all the Drugs produced by Nature herself, cannot rectify! But how much more *ruined*

Multitude, of *generous* and *compassionate* Beings, should be struck *dumb* with *Surprize* and *Terror*, at the very Mention of *The deadly Forfeiture and Ransom set!* No *Language* is so eloquent as this *Silence*. Words could not possibly have expressed, in so emphatical a Manner, the *dreadful Nature* of the Task; the *absolute Inability* of any or all Creatures to execute it; the super-eminent and *matchless Love* of the Eternal Son, in undertaking the tremendous Work; not only without Reluctance, but unfought and unimplored; with Readiness, Alacrity, and Delight. *Paradise Lost*, Book III. Line 209. Edit. BENTL.

was

was thy *Condition*, O my Soul! how much more *heinous* were thy *Crimes*! Since nothing less than the Sufferings and Death of Messiah, the Son of God, and radiant Image of his Glory, could *effect* thy *Recovery*, or *cancel* thy *Iniquity*.---Though perhaps, thou art not sunk so very deep in Pollution, as some of the most abandoned Profligates; yet remember the inestimable Ransom, paid to redeem thee from everlasting Destruction. Remember this; and “never open thy Mouth “any more *,” either to *murmur* at the Divine Chastisements, or to *glory* in thy own Attainments. Remember this; and even “*loath* thyself † for the Multitude of thy “Provocations,” and thy great Baseness.

ONCE more: Let me view this beautiful, this magnificent Expanse; and conceive some juster Apprehensions, of the unknown *Richness* of my *Saviour's Atonement*.---I am informed by a Writer who cannot mistake, that the High-Priest of my Profession, who was also the Sacrifice for my Sins, is *higher than the Heavens* ‡; more exalted in Dignity, more bright with Glory, than all the hea-

* Ezek. xvi. 63.

† Ezek. xxxvi. 31.

‡ Heb. vii. 26.

venly Mansions, and all their illustrious Inhabitants. If my Heart was humbled, at the Consideration of it's excessive Guilt; how do all my drooping Powers revive, at this delightful Thought! The poor Criminal, that seemed to be *tottering* on the very Brink of the infernal Pit; is *raised*, by such a Belief, even to the *Portals* of Paradise. My Self-abasement, I trust, will always continue; but my Fears, under the Influence of such a Conviction, are quite gone*. I do not,

* I am sorry to find, that some of my Readers were a little disgusted at this Expression, "*My Fears are quite gone.*" As thinking, it discovered a Tincture of Arrogance in the Writer, and tended to discourage the weak Christian. But, I hope, a *more mature* Consideration will acquit me, from *both* these Charges.——For, what has the Author said? Only, that at some *peculiarly happy* Moments, when the Holy Ghost bears Witness of CHRIST in his Heart, and He is favoured with a Glimpse of the Redeemer's matchless Excellency,—that, in these *bright Intervals* of Life, his trembling Fears, with regard to the decisive Sentence of the great Tribunal, are turned into pleasing Expectations. And what is there in such a Declaration, offensive to the *strictest* Modesty, or dispiriting to the *weakest* Believer? Instead of striking Terror, it points out the Way to obtain a settled Tranquillity. It's natural Tendency is, to engage the serious Mind in a *more constant* and *attentive* Meditation, on the unknown *Merits* of the Divine MEDIATOR. And were we *more thoroughly* acquainted, *more deeply* affected, with his unutterable Dignity; I am persuaded, our uneasy Apprehensions would *proportionably* vanish; our Faith be established, our Hopes brightened, and our Joys enlarged.

I cannot, doubt the Efficacy of this Propitiation. *While I see a Glimpse*, of it's matchless Excellency; and *verily believe* myself, interested in it's Merits; I know not what it is, to feel any misgiving Suspicions; but am steadfast in Faith, and joyful through Hope,

BE my Iniquities like Debts of Millions of Talents, here is more than full Payment for all that mighty Sum. Let the Enemy of Mankind, and Aceuser of the Brethren, load me with Invectives, before the dreadful Tribunal; this one *Plea, A Divine Redeemer died*, most thoroughly quashes every *Indictment*. For, though there be much Turpitude, and manifold Transgressions, "there is no Condemnation to those that are in CHRIST JESUS."---Nay, were I chargeable with all the vilest Deeds, that have been committed in every Age of the World, by every Nation of Men; even in this most deplorable Case, I need not sink into Despair. Even such Guilt, though grievous beyond all Expression, is not to be compared with the *Abundance of Grace and Righteousness*, which is in the *incarnate Divinity*.---How great, how transcendently glorious, are the *Perfections* of the adored JEHOVAH! So great,
fo

156 CONTEMPLATIONS

so superlatively precious, is the *Expiation* of the dying JESUS. 'Tis impossible for the human Mind to *exalt* this Atonement *, too highly ; 'tis impossible for the HUMBLE PENITENT to *confide* in it, too steadily. The Scriptures, the Scriptures of eternal Truth, have said it (exult, my Soul, in the Belief of it !) that the Blood on which we rely, is GOD's *own Blood* † ; and therefore all-sufficient to expiate, omnipotent to save.

DAVID, that most egregious Sinner, but more exemplary Saint, seems to have been well acquainted with this comfortable Truth. What else can be the Import of that very remarkable, but devout Declaration? *Thou*

* This Doctrine, though rich with *Consolation* to the ruined Sinner ; yet, is it not likely to open a Door for *Licentiousness* ; and embolden Transgressors to prosecute their VICES ?---No : It is the most powerful Motive to that *genuine* Repentance, which *flows* from an ardent Love of GOD ; and *operates* in a hearty Detestation of all Sin, and an unfeigned Desire to *abound* in the Works of Obedience. One, who knew the unmeasurable Goodness of the LORD, and was no Stranger to the sinful Perverseness of our Nature, says, *There is Mercy with Thee : THEREFORE shalt thou be feared.* Psal. cxxx. 4.---Words, full to my Purpose ; which at once add the *highest* Authority to *this Sentiment*, and direct our Minds to it's proper Influence, and due Improvement.

† Acts xx. 28.

shalt

shalt purge me with Hyssop, and I shall be clean: thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than Snow.*---“ I have been guilty, I must
 “ confess, of the most complicated and
 “ shocking Crimes: Crimes, inflamed by
 “ every aggravating Circumstance, with
 “ regard to Myself, my Neighbour, and my
 “ GOD. *Myself*, who have been blessed
 “ above Men, and the distinguished Fa-
 “ vourite of Providence; *my Neighbour*,
 “ who, in the most dear and tender Interests,
 “ has been irreparably injured; *my GOD*,
 “ who might justly expect the most grateful
 “ Returns of Duty, instead of such enor-
 “ mous Violations of his Law. Yet, all
 “ horrid and execrable as *my Offence* is, it is
 “ nothing to the superabundant *Merit* of
 “ that *great Redeemer*, who was promised
 “ from the Foundations of the World; in
 “ whom all my Fathers trusted; who is the
 “ Hope of all the Ends of the Earth.
 “ Though my Conscience be more *loathsome*,

* Psal. li. 7. *Thou shalt purge.* I prefer this Translation, before the new one. Because, this speaks the Language of a more *stedfast Belief*, and gives the *highest Honour* to the Divine Goodness. Were the Words intended to bear no more, than the common *petitionary Sense*; and not to be expressive of a noble *Plerophory of Faith*; they would rather have been—חטאני and כבסני *Imperatives*, not *Futures*.

“ with

158 CONTEMPLATIONS

“ with adulterous Impurity, than the *Dung-*
 “ *bil*; though the most barbarous of Mur-
 “ ders has rendered it, even *black* as the
 “ Gloom of *Hell*; yet, washed in ‘ the
 “ Fountain opened for Sin, and for Unclean-
 “ nefs *,’ I shall be---I say not, *pure only*,
 “ this were a Disparagement to the Efficacy
 “ of my Saviour’s Death; but I shall be fair
 “ as the *Lily*, and white as the *Snow*. Nay,
 “ let me not derogate from the glorious Ob-
 “ ject of my Confidence; cleansed by this
 “ sovereign Stream, I shall be *fairer* than
 “ the full-blown *Lily*, *whiter* than the new-
 “ fallen *Snows*.”

POWER, saith the Scripture, *belongeth*
unto GOD †.---And, in what majestic Lines,
 is this Attribute of *JEHOVAH* written,
 throughout the whole Volume of the Crea-
 tion? Especially, through those magnificent
 Pages, unfolded in yonder starry Regions.
 Which are therefore stiled, by the sweet and
 sublime Singer of *Israel*, “ The Firmament
 “ of his Power ‡.” Because, the grand
Exploits of Omnipotence are there displayed,
 with the utmost Pomp; and recorded, in
 the most legible Characters.

* Zech. xiii. 1. † Psal. lxii. 11. ‡ Psal. cl. 1.

WHO,

Who, that looks upward to the midnight Sky; and, with an Eye of Reason, beholds it's rolling Wonders; can forbear inquiring, Of *what* were those mighty Orbs *formed*?--- Amazing to relate! They were produced without Materials. They sprung from Emptiness itself. The *stately Fabric* of universal Nature emerged out of *Nothing*.--- What *Instruments* were used by the supreme Architect, to fashion the Parts with such exquisite Niceness, and give so beautiful a Polish to the Surface? With what, were the various Pieces of the complicated Structure, *cemented*; and how was all *connected* into one finely-proportioned, and nobly-finished Whole?---A *bare Fiat* accomplished all. LET THEM BE, said GOD. He added no more; and immediately the marvellous Edifice arose; adorned with every Beauty; displaying innumerable Perfections; and declaring, amidst admiring Seraphs, it's great Creator's Praise. "By the *Word* of " the LORD were the Heavens made, and all " the Host of them by the *Breath* of his " Mouth *."---What wonderful Force *fixed*

* If this Thought is admitted a Second time, and suffered to ennoble the next Paragraph; it is partly, because of it's unequalled *Sublimity*; partly, because it awakens the most *grand Idea* of creating Power; and partly, be-

some of those vast Globes, on an immovable Basis? What irresistible Impulse *bowled* others, through the dark Profound? And what coercive Energy *confined* their impetuous Courses, within the nicest, strictest Bounds! ---Nothing but his *sovereign Will*. For all Things were at first constituted, and all to this Day abide, “ according to his Ordinance.”

WITHOUT any toilsome Assiduity; or laborious Process; to raise---to touch---to *speak* such a Multitude of enormous Bodies into *Being*;---to *launch* them through the Spaces of the Sky, as an Arrow from the Hand of a Giant;---to impress on such *unwieldy Masses* a Motion, far outstripping the Swiftneſs of the winged Crea-

ture, because the *Practice* of the *Pſalmiſt*, an Authority too great to be controverted, is my Precedent.—The beautiful Stanza quoted from *Pſal.* xxxiii. 6. is a Proof, how thoroughly the Royal Poet entered into the *Majeſty* of the *Mosaic Narration*: The Repetition of the Sentiment, *ver.* 9. intimates, how peculiarly he was charmed, with that *noble Manner*, of deſcribing the Divine Operations: While the Turn of his own Composition ſhews, how perfectly he poſſeſſed the ſame *elevated Way* of thinking. And this, long before *Longinus* wrote the celebrated Treatiſe, which has taught the Heathen, as well as the Chriſtian World, to admire the *Dignity of the Jewiſh Legiſlator's Stile*. Vide *Longin. de Sublim.* Sect. IX.

tion;

tion * ;---and to *continue* them in the same *rapid Whirl*, for Thousands and Thousands of Years :—What an astonishing Instance of infinite Might is this !—Can any thing be impossible to the LORD, the LORD GOD ; the Creator and Controuler, of all the Ends of the Earth, all the Borders of the Universe ? Rather, is not all that we count *difficult*, perfect *Ease* to that glorious Being, who only spake, and the World was made † ? Who only gave Command, and the stupendous Axle was lodged fast, the lofty Wheels moved complete ?—What a sure Defence, O my Soul, is this everlasting Strength of thy God ! Be this thy continual *Refuge*, in the Article of *Danger* ; this thy never-failing *Resource*, in every Time of *Need*.

* To give *one* Instance of this Remark.—The *Earth*, in the diurnal Revolution, which it performs on it's own Axis, *whirls about* at the Rate of above a Thousand Miles an Hour. And, as the great Orbit, which it describes annually round the Sun, is reckoned at 540 Millions of Miles, it must *travel* near a Million and Half, each *Day*. ---What an *amazing Force* must be requisite, to protrude so vast a Globe : and wheel it on, loaded as it is with huge Mountains, and ponderous Rocks, at such a prodigious Degree of Rapidity ! It surpasses human Conception ! —How natural, how pertinent, how almost necessary, after such an Observation, is the Acknowledgement made by holy *Job* ! *I know that THOU canst do every thing, and that no Thought can be withholden from thee.* Chap. xlii. 2.

† Psal. xxxiii. 9.

WHAT cannot this uncontrollable Power, of the great JEHOVAH, effect for his People? Be their Miseries ever so galling, cannot this God relieve them? Be their Wants ever so numerous, cannot this God supply them? Be their Corruptions within, ever so inveterate; or their Temptations without, ever so importunate; cannot this mighty, mighty God subdue the one, and fortify them against the other?---Should *Trials*, with an incessant Vehemence, *sift* thee as Wheat; should *Tribulation*, with a Weight of Woes, almost *grind* thee to Powder; should *Pleasure*, with her bewitching Smiles, solicit thee to *delicious* Ruin; yet “hold thee fast by “God,” and lay thy Help upon Him that is omnipotent*. Thou canst not be in-

* It is a most charming Description, as well as comfortable Promise, which we find in *Isa.* xl. 29, 30, 31.—HE giveth Power to the Feeble; and to them that have no Might at all, He not only imparteth, but increaseth Strength; making it to abound, where it did not so much as exist. ---Without this Aid of JEHOVAH, even the Youths, in the very Prime of their Vigour and Activity, shall become languid in their Work, and weary in their Course. And the young Men, to whose Resolution and Abilities nothing seemed impracticable, shall not only not succeed, but utterly fall, and miscarry in their Enterprizes.---Whereas, they that wait upon the LORD, and rely on his Grace, shall press on, with a generous Ardor, from one Degree of religious Improvement to another: instead of exhausting, they shall renew their Strength; Difficulties shall ani-

volved

volved in such *calamitous Circumstances*, or exposed to such *imminent Peril*; but thy God, whom thou serveſt, is able to ſupport thee under the one, and to deliver thee from the other.---To *ſupport*! to *deliver*! O, let me not diſhonour the unlimited Greatneſs

mate, and Toil invigorate them; *they ſhall mount up*, as with ſoaring *Wings*, above all Oppoſition; they ſhall be carried through every Diſcouragement, as *Eagles* cleave the yielding Air: *They ſhall run*, with Speed and Alacrity, the Way of God's Commandments, and *not be weary*: *They ſhall hold on*, with Conſtancy and Perſeverance, in thoſe peaceful Paths, and *not faint*; but arrive at the End of their Progreſs, and win the Prize of their High Calling.

To this moſt cheering Doctrinè, permit me to add it's no leſs *beautiful* and *delightful Contrast*. *Eliphaz*, ſpeaking of the Enemies of the Righteous, ſays--לא נכחד קימנו--which is rendered by a great Critic in ſacred Learning, *Nihil exciſum factio nobis adverſaria*.—We ſhould reckon, our Language acquitted itſelf tolerably well, if, when depreciating the Abilities of an Adverſary, it ſhould repreſent them weak as the *ſcorched Thread*, feeble as the *diſſolving Smoke*. But theſe are cold Forms of Speech, compared with the Eloquence of the Eaſt. According to the Genius of our Bible, *All the Power that oppoſes the Godly*, is a mere Nothing; or, to ſpeak with a more emphatical Air of Contempt, *a deſtroyed, an extirpated Nothing*.—*Admire this Expreſſion*, ye that are charmed with daring Images, and (what *Tully* calls *verbum ardens*) a ſpirited and glowing Diction.—*Remember this Declaration*, ye that fight the good Fight of Faith. The *united Force* of all your Enemies, be it ever ſo formidable to the Eye of Fleſh, is, before your Almighty Guardian, *Nihil nihiſſimum*, not only Nothing, but *leſs than Nothing*, and Vanity. *Job* xxii. 20.

of his Power. He is able to exalt Thee, from the *deepest Distress*, to the most *triumphant Joy*; and to make even a *Complication* of Evils, *work together* for thy everlasting Good. *He is able*, not only to accomplish what I have been speaking, but *to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask, or think* *.

O! THE *wretched Condition* of the Wicked, who have this LORD of all Power for their Enemy! O! the *desperate Madnefs* of the Ungodly, who provoke the Almighty to Jealousy!---Befotted Creatures! are you able to contend with your Maker, and enter the Lists against incensed Omnipotence? Can

* I should, in this Place, avoid swelling the Notes any farther, was it not to take Notice of the inimitable Passage quoted above, and to be found *Eph.iii.20.*--Which, if I do not greatly mistake, is the most noble Representation of Divine Power, that it is possible for Words to frame.—To do all that our Tongue can *ask*, is a Miracle of Might. But we often think more than we can express, and are actuated with “*Groanings unutterable.*” Yet, to answer these vast Desires, is not beyond the Accomplishment of our heavenly Father.--Nay, to make all manner of Blessings commensurate to the *largest Stretch* of human Expectations, is a *small thing* with the GOD of Glory. He is able to do *above all*, that the most enlarged Apprehension can imagine; yea, to do *abundantly more, exceeding abundantly more*, than the Mind itself, in the *utmost Exertion* of it's Faculties, is capable of *wishing*, or knows how to *conceive*.

you *bear* the Fierceness of his Wrath, or sustain the Vengeance of his lifted Arm? At his Presence, though awfully serene, the Hills melt like Wax, and the "Mountains skip like frightened Lambs." At the least Intimation of his Displeasure, the Foundations of Nature rock, and the "Pillars of Heaven tremble." How then can a *withered Leaf* endure, when "his Lips are full of Indignation, and his Tongue as a devouring Fire?"---Or can any thing screen a guilty Worm, when the great and terrible God shall *whet his glittering Sword, and his Hand take hold on inexorable Judgment?* When *that Hand*, which shoots the Planets, Masses of excessive Bulk*, with such surprising Celerity, through the Sky: *that Hand*, which darts the Comets to such unmeasurable Distances, beyond the Orbit of our remotest Planet, beyond the Pursuit of the strongest Eye: when THAT HAND is stretched out

* One of the Planets (*Saturn*) is supposed to be more than 90 times as big, as the Globe on which we live. The largest of the Planets (*Jupiter*) is reckoned, above 200 times vaster, than this vast Collection of mighty Kingdoms, spacious Forests, towering Mountains, and boundless Oceans.---Such enormous Magnitude! winged with such prodigious Speed!---It raises Astonishment beyond Expression.—*With GOD is terrible Majesty!* Job xxxvii. 22.—*Who shall not fear THEE, O LORD, and glorify thy Name?* Rev. xv. 4.

166 CONTEMPLATIONS

to *punish*, can the Munition of Rocks, the Intervention of Seas, or even interposing Worlds, *divert* the Blow?---Consider this, *Ambition*; and bow thy haughty Crest. Consider this, *Disobedience*; and bend thy iron Sinew. O! consider this, all ye that forget, or affront, the tremendous JEHOVAH. He can, by a single Act of his Will, lay the *Universe* in utter Ruin: and can he want Power to bring *you*, in a Moment, to the Dust of Death, or to the Flames of Hell? He has,---I say not, Ten thousand Lightnings to scorch you to Ashes; Ten thousand Thunders to crush you into Atoms; but, what is unspeakably more dreadful,---He has an *Army of Terrors*, even in the *Look* of his angry *Countenance*: His very Frown is worse than Destruction.

I CANNOT dismiss this Subject, without admiring the *Patience* of the blessed God. Who, though so “strong and powerful, “yet is provoked every Day.”---Surely, as is his Majesty, so is his Mercy; his Pity altogether commensurate to his Power. If I *vilify* but the Name of an earthly Monarch; I lose my Liberty, and am confined to the Dungeon. If I *appear* in *Arms*, and draw the Sword, against my national Sovereign;
my

my Life is forfeited, and my very Blood will scarce atone for the Crime. But Thee I have dishonoured, O! thou King immortal and invisible! against Thee my Breast has cherished *secret Disaffection*; my Behaviour has risen up in *open Rebellion*; and yet I am spared, I am preserved. Instead of being banished from thy Presence; I sit at thy Table, and am fed from thy Hand. Instead of *pursuing* me with *Thunderbolts* of Vengeance, thy *Favours* surround me on every Side. That Arm, that injured Arm, which might justly fall, with irretrievable Ruin, on a Traitor's Head; is most graciously stretched out, to caress him, with the tenderest Endearments; to cherish him, with every Instance of parental Kindness.---O! thou mightiest, thou best of Beings, how am I pained at my very Soul, for such shameful and odious Disingenuity! Let me always abominate myself, as the basest of Creatures; but *adore* that unwearied Long-suffering of thine, which refuses to be irritated; *love* that unremitted Goodness, which no Acts of Ingratitude could stop, or so much as check, in it's gracious Current. O! let this *stubborn Heart*; which Duty could not bind; which Threatenings could not awe; be the Cap-

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tive,

tive, *the willing Captive*, of such triumphant Beneficence.

I HAVE often been struck with Wonder at that Almighty Skill, which *weighed* the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Balance; which *proportioned* the Waters in the Hollow of it's Hand, and *adjusted* the Dust of the Earth* by a Measure. But, how much more marvellous is that magnificent Oeconomy, which *poised* the Stars with in-

* *The Dust of the Earth*, in this sublime Scripture, signifies the *dry Land*, or *solid* Part of our Globe. Which is placed in Contradistinction to the whole Collection of *fluid* Matter, mentioned in the preceding Clause.—Perhaps, this remarkable Expression may be intended to intimate, not only the *extreme Niceness*, which stated the Dimensions of the round World, in *general*, or in the gross; but also that *particular Exactness*, with which the very smallest Materials, that constitute it's Frame (not excepting each individual Atom), were calculated and disposed:—*q. d.* 'Tis a small Thing to say, No such enormous Redundancies, as unnecessary Ridges of Mountains, were suffered to subsist. There was not so much as the least Grain of Sand *superfluous*, or a single Particle of Dust *deficient*.—As the grand Aim of the Description is, to celebrate the *consummate Wisdom* exemplified in the Creation; and to display that *perfect Proportion*, with which every Part tallies, coincides, and harmonizes, with the Whole; I have taken Leave to alter the Word of our *English* Translation *comprehend*, and introduce in it's stead a Term, equally faithful to the *Hebrew*, and more significative of the Prophet's precise Idea. *Isa. xl. 12.*

expressible

expressible Nicety, and *meted* out the *Heavens* with a Span ! Where all is prodigiously vast ; immensely various ; and yet more than mathematically exact. Surely, the *Wisdom* of God manifests itself in the Skies, and shines in those lucid Orbs : Shines on the contemplative Mind, with a Lustre incomparably brighter, than that which their united Splendors transmit to the Eye.---Behold that countless Multitude of Globes ; consider their amazing Bulk ; regard them as the Sovereigns of so many Systems, each accompanied with his planetary Equipage. Upon this Supposition, what a Multiplicity of mighty Spheres, must be perpetually running their Rounds, in the upper Regions ! Yet, none mistake their Way, or *wander* from the Goal ; though they pass through *trackless* and unbounded Fields. None *fly off* from their *Orbits*, into extravagant Excursions ; none *press in* upon their *Centre*, with too near an Approach. None *interfere* with each other in their perennial Passage ; or *intercept* the kindly Communications of another's Influence *. But

* The Interception of Light, by means of an *Eclipse*, happens very *rarely* : And then, is of so *short* a *Continuance*, as not to be at all inconvenient : Is attended with such *Circumstances*, as render it rather useful, than prejudicial.

170 C O N T E M P L A T I O N S

all their Rotations proceed in eternal Harmony ; keeping fuch Time, and observing fuch Laws, as are moft exquisitely adapted to the Perfection of the Whole.

W H I L E I contemplate this “ excellent “ Wifdom, which made the Heavens,” and attunes all their Motions ; how am I abafhed at that Mixture of *Arrogance* and *Folly*, which has, at any time, inclined me to *murmur* at thy *Dispensations*, O LORD ! What is this, but a fort of implicit Treafon againft thy Supremacy ; and a tacit Denial of thy infinite Underftanding ?---Hafth Thou fo regularly placed fuch a wonderful Diverfity of Systems, through the boundlefs Univerfe ? ---Didft Thou, without any probationary Effays, without any improving Retouches, fpeak them into the moft consummate Perfection ?----Dofth Thou continually superintend all their Circumftances, with a Sagacity, that never mistakes, the minuteft *Tittle of Propriety* ? And fhall I be fo unaccountably ftupid, as to question the *Juftnefs* of thy *Discernment*, in “ choofing my Inheritance, and fixing the Bounds of my “ Habitation !”---Not a *single Erratum*, in modelling the Structure ; determining the
Distance;

Distance *; and conducting the Career of *unnumbered Worlds!* And shall my peevish Humour presume to *censure* thy *Interposition*, with regard to the Affairs of *one* inconsiderable *Creature*; whose Stature, in such a comparative View, is less than a Span; and his present Duration, little more than a Moment?

O! THOU GOD, “in whose Hand my “Breath is, and whose are all my Ways,” let such Sentiments as now possess my Thoughts, be always lively on my Heart! These shall compose my Mind into a *cheerful* Acquiescence, and *thankful* Submission; even when Afflictions *gall* the Sense, or Disappointments *break* my Schemes. Then shall I, like the grateful Patriarch †, in all the Changes of my Condition, and even in the

* The Sun in particular (and let this serve as a Specimen of that most geometrical Exactness, with which the other celestial Bodies are constituted, and all their Circumstances regulated) the Sun is formed of such a determinate Magnitude, and placed at such a convenient Distance,—“as “not to annoy, but only refresh us, and nourish the “Ground with it’s kindly Warmth. If it was *larger*, “it would set the Earth on Fire; if *smaller*, it would “leave it frozen. If it was *nearer* us, we should be “scorched to Death; if *farther* from us, we should not “be able to live for want of Heat.”

Stackhouse’s History of the Bible.

† See Gen. xii. 7, 8.

Depths

Depths of Distress, erect an *Altar* of adoring Resignation; and inscribe it with the Apostle's *Motto*, TO GOD ONLY WISE. Then, shouldst Thou give me Leave to be the Carver of my own Fortunes, I would humbly desire to relinquish the Grant, and recommit the Disposal of myself to thy unerring Beneficence. Fully persuaded, that *thy Counsels*; though contrary to my froward Inclinations, or even afflictive to my Flesh; are incomparably more eligible, than the *blind Impulse* of my own Will, however soothing to animal Nature.

ON a careless Inspection, you perceive no Accuracy or Uniformity in the Position of the heavenly Bodies. They appear like an *illustrious Chaos*; a promiscuous Heap of shining Globes; neither ranked in Order, nor moving by Line.--But, what *seems* Confusion, is all Regularity. What carries a Shew of Negligence, is really the Result of the most masterly Contrivance. You think, perhaps, they rove in their aerial Flight; but they rove by the nicest Rule, and without the least Error. Their Circuits, though seemingly *devious*; their Mazes, though *intricate*

tricate to our Apprehensions*; are marked out, not indeed with *golden Compasses*, but by the infinitely more *exact Determinations* of the all-wise Spirit.

So, what wears the *Appearance* of *Calamity*, in the Allotments appointed for the Godly, has really the *Nature* of a *Blessing*. It issues from fatherly Love, and will terminate in the richest Good. If *Joseph* is snatched from the Embraces of an indulgent Parent, and abandoned to Slavery in a foreign Land; it is in order to save the holy Family, from perishing by Famine; and to preserve "the Seed, in whom all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed." If he falls into the deepest Disgrace, it is on purpose that he may rise to the highest Honours. Even the *Confinement* of the *Prison*, by the unsearchable Workings of Providence, *opens* his Way to the Right-hand of the *Throne* itself.---Let the most afflicted Servant of JESUS, wait the final Upshot of Things: and he will *then* discover the apparent Expediency, of all those Tribulations; which

* ——— Mazes intricate,
Eccentric, intervolv'd; yet regular
Then most, when most irregular they seem.

MILT.

now,

now, perhaps, he can hardly admit, without Reluctance; or suffer, without some Struggles of Dissatisfaction. Then, the gushing Tear, and the heaving Sigh, will be turned into Tides of Gratitude, and Hymns of holy Wonder.

IN the mean time, let no audacious Railer, tax the Divine Procedure; but, *adoring* where we cannot *comprehend*, let us expect the *Evolution* of the mysterious Plan. Then, shall every Eye perceive; that the seeming *Labyrinths* of Providence, were the most *direct* and *compendious* Way; to effect his general Purposes of Grace, and to bring about each One's particular Happiness *---Then, also, shall it be clearly shewn, in the Presence of applauding Worlds; Why, Virtue pined in Want, while Vice rioted in Affluence: Why, amiable Innocence so often *dragged* the Dungeon Chain, while horrid Guilt *trailed* the Robe of State.---That Day of universal Audit, that Day of everlasting Retribution, will not only *vindicate*, but *mag-*

* ————— The *moral World*,
Which, though to Us it seems embroil'd, moves on
In higher Order; fitted, and impell'd
By *Wisdom's* finest Hand, and issuing all
In gen'ral Good—————

THOMS. *Winter*, l. 586. last Edit.

nify,

nify, the whole Management of Heaven. The august Sessions shall close with this unanimous, this glorious Acknowledgement :
 “ Though *Clouds and Darknefs*, impenetrable
 “ by any human Scrutiny, *were* sometimes
 “ round about the supreme Conductor of
 “ Things ; yet *Righteousnefs and Judgment*
 “ *were* the constant *Habitation of his Seat* * ;
 “ the invariable Standard of all his Admi-
 “ nistrations.”---While we view (if I may illustrate the grandest Truths, by inferior Occurrences ; while we view) the *Arras*, on the Side of *least Distinction*, it is void of any elegant Fancy ; without any nice Strokes of Art ; nothing but a confused Jumble of incoherent Threads. No sooner is the Piece beheld in it's *proper Aspect*, but the suspected Rudeness vanishes, and the most curious Arrangement takes place ; we are charmed with Designs of the finest Taste, and Figures of the most graceful Forms ; all is shaped with Symmetry ; all is clad in Beauty.

THE *Goodness* of GOD is most eminently displayed in the Skies.---Could we take an understanding Survey, of whatever is formed by the Divine Architect, throughout the

* Psal. xcvi. 2.

176 CONTEMPLATIONS

whole Extent of *material* Things ; our Minds would be charmed with their matchless Excellencies, and our Tongues echo back that great Encomium, They are “ very, “ very good.” Most *beautiful** in themselves ; contrived by unerring Wisdom, and executed with inimitable Skill : Most *useful** in their Functions ; exactly fitting the Places they fill, and completely answering the Purposes, for which they were intended.---All the Parts of the inanimate Creation proclaim, both by their *intrinsic* and *relative* Excellencies, the all-diffusive Beneficence of their Maker.

How much more wonderful are the Displays of Divine Indulgence, in the Worlds of *Life* ! Because, dead Matter is incapable

* * This *καλοκαγαθία* of the Universe, and all it's Parts, has been very highly, and very justly, extolled, by the antient Inquirers into Nature. And was, indeed, an illustrious Scene, spread before the Sages of the Heathen World ; wherein to contemplate the Goodness, and the Glories, of the Supreme Being.--It was nobly said, by a Pagan Philosopher, on this Occasion. *Εἰς ἐρώλα μετα-βληθῆναι τοῦ Θεοῦ μελλούσα δημιουργεῖν* That GOD, when he undertook the Work of Creation, transformed himself into Love.—But he need not transform Himself into this amiable Principle ; for “ God is Love : ” As was much more loftily said by One, whom that *Philosopher* would have termed a *Barbarian*. 1 *John* iv. 8.

of

of Delight; therefore, the gracious Creator has raised innumerable Ranks, of *perceptive Existence*: Such as are qualified to taste his Bounty, and enjoy each a *Happiness* suited to it's peculiar State. With this View, He furnished the Regions of inferior Nature, with a most numerous Series of sensitive Beings. The *Waters*, teem with Shoals of finny Inhabitants. The *dry Land*, swarms with Animals of every Order. The Dwellings of the *Firmament*, are occupied by Multitudes of winged People. Not so much as a *green Leaf*, Philosophers say, but lodges, and accommodates, it's puny animalcule Tenants*.---And wherefore this Diversity, this Profusion of living Creatures; flying

* A very celebrated Poet, in a beautiful Paragraph on this Subject, informs his Readers, That all Nature swarms with Life. In subterranean *Cells*, the Earth heaves with vital Motion. Even the hard *Stone*, in the very inmost Recesses of it's impenetrable Citadel, holds Multitudes of animated Inhabitants. The *Pulp* of mellow *Fruit*, and all the Productions of the Orchard, feed the invisible Nations. Each *Liquid*, whether of acid Taste, or milder Relish, abounds with various Forms of sensitive Existence. Nor is the pure *Stream*, or transparent *Air*, without their Colonies of unseen People.---In which Constitution of Things, we have a wonderful Instance, not only of the Divine Goodness to those minute Beings, in giving them a *Capacity* for animal Gratifications; but of his tender Care for Mankind, in making them *imperceptible* to our Senses.

178 CONTEMPLATIONS

the Air, treading the Ground, and gliding through the Paths of the Sea? For this noble Reason,—That the great Sovereign may exercise his superabundant Goodness; that his *Table* may be furnished, with Millions and Millions of *Guests*; that He may fill, every Hour, every Moment, their Mouths with *Food*, or their Hearts with *Gladness*.

BUT, what a small Theatre are Three or *Four Elements*, for the Operations of JEHOVAH's Bounty! His magnificent Liberality, scorns such scanty Limits. If you ask, Wherefore has He created *all Worlds*, and replenished them with an unknown *Multiplicity* of *Beings*; rising, one above another, in an endless Gradation of still richer Endowments, and still nobler Capacities? The Answer is,---For the Manifestation of his own Glory, and especially for the *Communication* of his inexhaustible *Beneficence* *.

—These, conceal'd
By the kind Art of forming Heav'n, escape
The grosser Eye of Man: For, if the Worlds
In Worlds inclos'd should on his Senses burst;
From Cates ambrosial, and the nectar'd Bowl,
He'd turn abhorrent; and, in dead of Night,
When Silence sleeps o'er all, be stunn'd with Noise.

THOMSON'S *Summer*.

* A *sacred Writer*, considering this pleasing Subject; and confining his Observation, within the *narrow Limits*

The

The great Creator could propose no Advantage to himself. His Bliss is incapable of any Addition. "Before the Mountains " were brought forth, or ever the Earth " and the World were made," He was supremely happy, in his own independent and all-sufficient Self. His grand Design therefore, in erecting so many stately Fabrics; and peopling them with so many Tribes of Inhabitants; was, To *transfuse* his exuberant *Kindness*, and *impart Felicity* in all its Forms. Ten thousand Worlds, stocked with Ten thousand times Ten thousand Ranks, of sensitive and intelligent Existence, are so many *spacious Gardens*; which, with *Rivers* of communicated Joy, this ever-flowing Fountain waters continually.

BOUNDLESS*, and (which raises our Idea of this Divine Principle, to the very highest Degree of Perfection) disinterested* Muni-

of his own Country; cries out with a Mixture of Amazement and Gratitude, *How great is his Goodness, and how great is his Beauty!*—Who then can forbear being lost in Wonder, and transported with Delight; when he extends his Survey, to those infinitely more *copious Communications* of Divine Bounty; which, like salutary and refreshing Streams, run through all Worlds; and make, not only the *little Valleys* of a single Kingdom, but the *Immensities of Creation*, laugh and sing? Zech. ix. 17.

* * In this Sense, *There is none good, but One, that is, GOD.* None universally and essentially good: None,

180 C O N T E M P L A T I O N S

ficence! How *inexpressibly amiable* is the blessed God, considered in this charming Light! Is it possible to conceive any Excellence, so adorable and lovely; as infinite Benevolence, guided by unerring Wisdom, and exerting Almighty Power, on purpose to make a whole Universe happy?---O my Soul, what an *irresistible Attractive* is here! What a most worthy Object, for thy most fervent Affection! Shall now every glittering Toy, become a Rival to this transcendently beneficent Being, and rob Him of thy Heart?---O! no. Let his creating Arm teach thee, to *trust* in the Fulness of his Sufficiency:---Let his all-superintending Eye incline thee, to *submit* to his Decrees:---And let his Bounty; so freely vouchsafed; so amply diffused; win thee to *love* Him, with all the warmest Affections of a grateful and admiring Soul: win thee to *serve* Him, not with joyless Awe, or slavish Dread, but with unfeigned Alacrity, and a delightful Complacency.

BUT, if the Goodness of God is so admirably seen, in the Works of Nature, and

whose Goodness extends itself, in an infinite *Variety* of Blessings, to *every* capable Object; or, who always dispenses his Favours, from the *sole* Principle of *free* and disinterested Benevolence.

the

the Favours of Providence; with what a noble Superiority, does it *even triumph*, in the *Mystery of Redemption**! Redemption, is the brightest Mirror, in which to contemplate this most lovely Attribute of the Deity. Other Gifts, are only as *Mites* from the Divine Treasury; but Redemption opens, I had almost said exhausts, all the *Stores* of his glorious Grace. Herein, "God com-
" *mendeth* his Love†:" not only manifests, but renders it perfectly marvellous: manifests it in so stupendous a Manner, that it is beyond Parallel; beyond Thought; and

* In this, and in other Parts of the *Contemplations*, the Reader will observe, That the Attributes of the DEITY are represented, as shining, with more distinguished Lustre, in the Wonders of *Redemption*, than in the Works of *Creation*. If *such* Remarks should seem to be unprecedented, or to stand in Need of a Vindication; permit me to subjoin the Sentiments of a great Critic, equally versed in *both* those sublime Theories.—"Tully, says He, requires, in his perfect Orator, some Skill in the Nature of heavenly Bodies; because, his Mind will become more extensive and unconfined; and, when He descends to treat of human Affairs, He will both think and write in a more exalted and magnificent Manner. For the same Reason, that excellent Master would have recommended the Study of those great and glorious Mysteries, which Revelation has discovered to Us; to which the noblest Parts of this System of the World are as much inferior, as the Creature is less excellent than the Creator." *Spec.* Vol. VIII. N° 633.

† Rom. v. 8.

182 CONTEMPLATIONS

“above all Blessing and Praise.”---Was He not thy *Son*, Everlasting God, thy *only* Son; the Son of thy Bosom from eternal Ages; the highest *Object* of thy complacential *Delight*? Was not thy Love to this adorable Son, incomparably greater than the *tendereſt* Affection of *Any*, or the *united* Affections of *All*, mortal Parents? Was not the blessed JESUS more illustrious in Excellency, than all Angels; more exalted in Dignity, than all Heavens? And yet, didst thou resign HIM, for poor Mortals; for vile Sinners? Couldst thou see Him descend, from his *Royal Throne*; and take up his Abode, in the *sordid Stable*? See him forego the *Homage* of the *Seraphim*; and stand exposed to the reproachful *Indignities*, of an insolent *Rabble*? See Him arraigned at the Bar, and sentenced to Death; numbered with Malefactors, and nailed to the Gibbet; bathed in his own innocent Blood, and pouring out his Soul in Agonies of Sorrow?---Could the Father, the Father *himself*, with unknown Philanthropy, say; “It must, it shall, be so?” “My Pity to rebellious Man pleads, and prevails. Awake, therefore, O *Sword**, edged with divine Wrath. Awake; and

* Zech. xiii. 7.

ON THE STARRY HEAVENS. 183

“ be sheathed in that *immaculate Breast* ;
 “ pierce that *dearly beloved Heart*. I am
 “ content, that my Son endure the Sharp-
 “ ness of Death, rather than *sinful Mortals*
 “ perish for ever.”---Incomprehensible Love !
 May it, henceforward, be the favourite
 Subject of my *Meditation* ; more delightful
 to my musing Mind, than Applause to the
 ambitious Ear ! May it be the darling Theme
 of my *Discourse* ; sweeter to my Tongue,
 than the Droppings of the Honeycomb to
 my Taste ! May it be my choicest *Comfort*,
 through all the Changes of *Life* ; and my
 reviving *Cordial*, even in the last Extremities
 of *Dissolution* itself !

A *PROPHET*, contemplating, with a
 distant Survey, this unexampled Instance of
 Almighty Love, is rapt into a *Transport* of
Delight. At a Loss for proper Acknow-
 legements, he calls upon the whole Universe
 to aid his labouring Breast, and supply his
 Lack of Praise. *Sing melodiously, ye vaulted*
Heavens ; exult, and even leap for Gladness,
thou cumberous Earth ; ye Mountains, break
your long Silence, and burst into Peals of
*loudest Acclamation * ; for the LORD, by this*

* *Isa.* xlix. 13.—I have not adhered to our common
 Translation, but endeavoured to preserve, somewhat more

184 CONTEMPLATIONS

precious Gift, and this great Salvation, *hath comforted his People*.---A *sacred Historian* hath left it upon Record; that, at the first Exhibition of this ravishing Scene, there was with the Angel, who brought the blessed Tidings, a Multitude of the heavenly Host; praising God, and making the Concave of the Skies resound with their Hallelujahs. At the Dawn of the Sun of Righteousness, when He was beginning to rise with Healing in his Wings, the *Morning Stars* sang together, and all the *Sons of GOD* shouted for Joy.---And shall *Man*, whom this gracious Dispensation principally respects; shall *Man*, who is the Centre of all these gladdening Rays; shall He have no *Heart to adore*, no *Anthem to celebrate*, This

Love without End, and without Measure
Grace? MILT.

faithfully, the noble *Pathos*, and inimitable *Energy*, of the sacred Original.—The Love of GOD manifested in a Divine and dying Saviour, is a Blessing of such *inconceivable Richness*; as must render all Acknowledgements *flat*, and all Encomiums *languid*. Yet, I think, the most poetical and most *emphatical Celebration* of that unspeakable Instance of Goodness, is contained in this rapturous Exclamation of the Prophet. Which intimates, with a wonderful Majesty of Sentiment, that even the whole Compass of the *inanimate Creation*; could it be *sensible* of the Benefit, and capable of *Delight*; would express it's *Gratitude*, in all these Demonstrations of the most lively and exuberant Joy.

Love

How *clear* is the Face of the Sky, and how perfectly *pure* ! Clearer than the limpid Stream, more pure than the polished Crystal. That *stately Cieling* ; fretted with Gold, and stretched to an Extent of many Millions of Leagues ; is not disfigured with a *single Flaw*. That *azure Mantle* ; embroidered with Stars, and spacious enough to form a Covering for unnumbered Worlds ; is without the least *Spot* or *Wrinkle*.---Yet, this can scarce yield us, so much as a faint Representation of the *Divine Purity*. GOD, is a GOD of the most immaculate Excellence. His Ways are Uprightness itself ; his Counsels and Words, the very Sanctity of Wisdom, and of Truth. The *Laws*, which He has given to *universal Nature* ; are exquisitely contrived, and beyond all Possibility of Improvement. The *Precepts*, which He has appointed for the *human Race* ; are a complete Summary, of all that is honourable in itself, and perfective of the rational Mind.---Not the least *Oversight*, in planning a Series of Events for all Futurity ; nor the least *Male-administration*, in managing the Affairs of every Age, since Time began ; of every Nation, under the whole Heaven,---Pardon these disparaging Expressions. A
negative

186 CONTEMPLATIONS

negative Perfection is far, far beneath thy Dignity, O *Thou most Highest* *. In all these Instances; in all thy Acts, and all thy Attributes; Thou art not only holy, but "*glorious in Holiness.*"

* *O Thou most Highest.*---This Expression occurs more than once, in the Psalms used by the Established Church. And is, I think, one of those *Beauties*; which, because often exhibited, generally escape our Notice. It is a *Superlative* formed on a Superlative; and, though not strictly conformable to *grammatical Rules*, is nobly superior to them all.—The *Language* seems to be sensible of it's own *Deficiency*; when the incomprehensible JEHOVAH is addressed, or celebrated. Oppressed, as it were, with the Glories of the Subject, it labours after a *more emphatical* manner of Diction, than the *ordinary Forms* of Speech afford.—It is, if I rightly judge, one of those daring and happy Peculiarities of a masterly Genius, which Mr. Pope so finely describes; and, while he describes, exemplifies:

Great Wits sometimes may gloriously offend,
And rise to Faults true Critics dare not mend;
From vulgar Bounds with brave Disorder part,
And snatch a Grace beyond the Reach of Art.

Essay on Criticism.

St. Paul's—*ελαχιστοτερον παντων των αγιων*—is a beautiful Passage of the like Nature; which our Translators have very properly rendered, *Less than the least of all Saints.*—His—*πολλω μαλλον κρεισσον*—is another Instance of the same Kind. But here, the *English* Version fails. *Far better*—is extremely *flaccid*, compared with the *nervous* Original. And I greatly question, whether it is possible to translate the Sentence with equal Conciseness, and equal Spirit. See *Eph. iii. 8. Phil. i. 23.*

So inconceivably holy is the LORD GOD of Hosts, that He sees *Defilement* even in the *Brightness* of yonder Firmament. Those living Sapphires, before his Majesty, lose their Lustre. He looketh even to the Moon, and it shineth not; yea, the Stars are not pure in his Sight. How much less, Man, who, in his fallen and depraved State, is little better than a Worm, that crawls in the corrupted Carcase; and the Son of Man, who, by reason of his manifold actual Impurities, is too justly compared to an Insect, that wallows amidst Stench and Putrefaction *?—Is there not then abundant Cause, for the most irreproachable and eminent of Mankind, to re-

* Job xxv. 5, 6. I submit it to the Judgment of the Learned, Whether this is not the true Meaning of the Text.—It may not be able, perhaps, to recommend itself, to the *squeamishly nice* Critic; or to those, who are always extolling, the *supposed Dignity* of the human Nature. But it seems, in Preference to every other Interpretation, *suitable* to the sacred Context; and is far, far from being *injurious* to the Character of that apostate Race, which is “altogether become abominable,” and “is as an unclean Thing.”—On this Supposition, there is not only an *apparent*, but a very *striking* Contrast, between the Purity of GOD, and the Pollution of Man: The Purity of the most high GOD, which outshines the Moon, and eclipses the Stars; the Pollution of degenerate Man, which, exclusive of a Saviour, would render him as loathsome to the all-seeing Eye, as the vilest Vermin

nounce

188 CONTEMPLATIONS

nounce all *arrogant Pretensions*; to lay aside every assuming Air; to take nothing but *Shame* and Confusion to *themselves*? A holy Sufferer, and holy Prophet, felt such humbling Impressions, from a Glimpse of the uncreated Purity. *I abhor myself in Dust and Ashes**, was the Declaration of the one: *I am a Man of unclean Lips*†, the Confession of the other.—And should not this teach us all, to adore the Divine Mercies, for that precious *purifying Fountain*‡; which was foretold from the Foundations of the World; but was opened at that awful Junction, when knotty *Whips* tore the Flesh;

are in ours.—Without assigning this Sense to the Passage, I cannot discern the Force of the *Antithesis*, or indeed the *Propriety* of the Sentiment. Worms, in the general, give us an Idea of *Meanness* and *Infirmity*; not of *Defilement* and *Impurity*; unless they are Insects of such a particular Kind, and considered in such noisome Circumstances.—The two Words of the Original—רמָה and תולעָה—are evidently used in this Signification by *Moses* and *Isaiah*; by the one, to denote the Vermin, that devoured the *putrefied Manna*; by the other, to express the Reptiles, which swarm in the *Body* that sees *Corruption*, *Exod.* xvi. 20. *Isa.* xiv. 11.

* *Job* xlii. 6.

† *Isa.* vi. 5.

‡ *In that Day there shall be a Fountain, opened to the House of David, and to the Inhabitants of Jerusalem, for Sin and Uncleaness.* *Zech.* xiii. 1.

when

when ragged *Thorns* mangled the Temples;
 when sharpened *Nails* cut fresh Sluices for
 the crimson Current; when the Gash of the
Spear completed the dreadful Work, and
forthwith flowed there, from the wounded
 Heart, *Blood and Water*?

ESPECIALLY since the GOD, in whose
 Sight the *very Heavens* are *not unfulfilled*;
 though so curiously fine, and “spread out like
 “a molten Looking-glass;”---since this GOD
 saw *no Blemish* in his *dear Son*. His all-
 penetrating and jealous Eye, discerned no-
 thing amiss, nothing defective, in our glo-
 rious Redeemer. Nothing amiss? Yea, He
 bore this most illustrious Testimony, con-
 cerning his holy Child JESUS: “In Him I
 “am *pleased*; I am *well pleased*; I acquiesce,
 “with intire Complacency, and the *highest*
 “*Delight*, in his Person; his Undertaking;
 “and the whole Execution of his Office.”
 —How should this Thought, *enliven* our
Hopes; while the other, *mortifies* our *Pride*?
 Ought not our Hearts, to spring within us,
 and even leap for Joy; from the repeated
 Assurances given us by Revelation, That
 such a divinely excellent Being is our Media-
 tor? What apparent Reason has every Be-
 liever, to adopt the blessed Virgin’s Excla-
 mation!

190 CONTEMPLATIONS

mation † “ *My Soul doth magnify the LORD*
 “ for this transcendent Mercy; and my Spirit
 “ rejoices, not in wide-extended Harvests,
 “ waving over my fertile Glebe*; not in
 “ Armies vanquished, and leaving the pe-
 “ culiar Treasure of Nations for my Spoil*;
 “ but in an infinitely richer, nobler Blessing,
 “ even in GOD my Saviour.” — That a Person
 so sublime and perfect, has vouchsafed to
 become my Surety; to give Himself for my
 Ransom, in the World below; and act as
 my Advocate, in the Royal Presence above:
 yea, to make my Recovery, the Reward of
 his Sufferings; my final Felicity, the Honour
 of his mediatorial Kingdom!

WHEN an innumerable Multitude † of
 Bodies, many of them more than a Hundred
 thousand Miles in Diameter, are ‡ all set in

* * The inspired Penman, from these Two Occasions
 of distinguished Joy, sets forth the incomparably greater
 Delight, which arises from the Gift of a Saviour, and the
 Blessing of Redemption. *Isa. ix. ver. 3.* compared with
ver. 6.

† This refers, not only to the Planets which pass and
 repass about our Sun, but also to the other Planetary
 Worlds, which are supposed to attend the several fixed
 Stars.

‡ The Diameter of Jupiter is calculated at 130,653
 Miles, while his Orbit is reckoned to consist of 895,134,000.

Motion:—when the *Orbits*, in which they perform their periodical Revolutions, are extended at the Rate of several Hundreds of *Millions*:—when each has a *distinct* and separate *Sphere*, for finishing his vast Circuit:—when none knows, what it is to be *cramped*; but most *freely expatiates*, in his unbounded Career:—when every one is placed, at such an *immense Remove* from each other; that they appear to their respective Inhabitants, only as so many *Spots of Light*:—O! how astonishing must be the *Expanse*, which yields *Room* for all those mighty Globes, and their widely-diffused Operations! To what prodigious Lengths did the Almighty Builder stretch his Line, when He marked out the stupendous Platform!—I wonder at such an immeasurable Extent. My very Thoughts are lost, in this *Abyss* of Space. But, be it known to Mortals; be it never forgot by Sinners; that, in all it's most *surprising Amplitude*, it is *small*, it is *scanty*, compared with the Bounty and the Mercy of it's Maker.

Which Computation, according to the Maxims of Astronomy, and the Laws of Proportion, may, as is taken for granted in the Contemplations, be applied to *other Planets* revolving round *other Suns*.

HIS

192 CONTEMPLATIONS

His *Bounty* is absolutely without Limits*, and without End. The most lavish Generosity cannot *exhaust*, or even *diminish*, his Munificence. O! all ye Tribes of Men; or rather, all ye Classes of intelligent Creatures; ye are not streightened in the *Liberality* of your ever-blessed Creator; be not streightened in your own *Expectations*. “Open your Mouth wide, and He shall “fill it” with copious and continual Draughts from the Cup of Joy. Your GOD, on whom is your whole Dependence, is more than able; is more than willing; to “supply all your “Need, according to his Riches in Glory.” —When the LORD JEHOVAH is the Giver, and his Grace† the Gift; let your Wishes be

* By *Bounty*, I mean, not the actual *Exercise*, or the *Effects*, of this Excellency in the Deity. These *are*, and always *must be*, through the immense Perfection of the Attribute, and the necessary Scantiness of the Recipient, bounded. But, I would be understood, as speaking of the Divine *Power*, and the Divine *Will*, to exert Divine Beneficence. These can have no real, no imaginable Limits. These, after a Communication of Blessings, distributed to unnumbered Worlds, continued through unnumbered Ages, must *still* have more to bestow; for *ever* have more to bestow; *infinitely* more to bestow, than it is possible for Creation itself to receive.

† 2 Cor. ix. 8. GOD is able to make all Grace abound towards you, that ye, having all Sufficiency in all Things, may abound to every good Work.—How beautiful, and emphatical, is this Description! inferior to nothing, but that Extent of Ability, and those Riches of Liberal-
unbounded,

unbounded, and your Cravings insatiable. *All* that created Beings can possibly *covet*, is but a very small *Pittance* of that unknown Happiness, which the Everlasting Benefactor is ready to *bestow*. Form not your Estimate of the *supreme Beneficence*, from those narrow Models of *mortal Kindness*; which either your own Experience has observed, or the History of Ages has recorded. Suppose every charitable Disposition, which warms the Hearts of the human Race, added to those more enlarged Affections, which glow in heavenly Bosoms; what were they all, even in their highest Exercise, compared with the Benignity of the Divine Nature? —Bless *me* then, Thou eternal Source of Love; bless *all* that reverence thy holy Name; according to thy own most profuse Goodness: whose great Prerogative it is, to disdain all Measure. O! bless us, in proportion to that Grace; the Richness of which (unutterable by the Tongues of Men, and of Angels) was once *spoke* in the *Groans*, and *written* in the *Wounds*, of thy expiring Son!

ity, which it so eloquently celebrates. Does it not *exhaust* all the *Powers* of Language; while it attempts to give us a *Specimen*, of the *Munificence* of the LORD?

AND as for the *Mercy* of God, it is “greater than the Heavens;” more extensive than the Dimensions of the Sky. Charming Thought! transporting Reflection! let me indulge Thee once more*. Let me think over the noble Displays of this lovely Attribute; and, while I admire the *Trophies* of *forgiving Goodness*, add one to the Number.—With what amiable and affecting Colours, is this represented in the *Parable* of the *Prodigal*! What could induce that foolish Youth, to forsake his gracious Father? Had he not been tenderly cherished, by the good Parent; and loaded with Benefits, from his indulgent Hand? Were not the *Restraints* of parental Government, an *easy Yoke*? or rather, a *Preserva-*

* This refers to Page 125. of *Reflections on a Flower-Garden*.—The following Pages, to the 201st, exhibit a *digressive* View of the Divine *Mercy*. I thought it proper to apprise my Reader of this Excursion; though, I hope, it will be needless to offer an Apology, for dwelling so long upon this delightful Theme. Who can complain of *Tediousness*, while I speak *Consolation* to distressed, and *Recovery* to ruined Creatures? The Divine *Mercy* is the sole Fountain of all our present and future Blessings. In proportion to this benign Attribute, human Hopes arise, and human Felicity flows. Who, therefore, can be weary of *viewing* and *reviewing*; when the *Lengths* and *Breadths* of forgiving Grace, are the ravishing Prospect?

tive from *Ruin*? Notwithstanding every en-
 dearing Obligation, he revolts from his
 Duty; and launches out into such scanda-
 lous Irregularities, as were a Dishonour to
 his Family, and destructive to himself.—
 But, when Afflictions brought him to a
 Sense of his Folly, and sharp Necessity drove
 him to a submissive Return; did the *injured*
Father discover the least *Resentment* of Mind?
 Quite the Reverse. He espied him, while
 he was yet a *great Way off*; and, the Mo-
 ment he beheld the profligate Creature,
 “his Bowels sounded like an Harp,” touch-
 ed with Notes divinely soft. He never once
 thinks of the riotous Living, and infamous
 Course of Debaucheries. Pity, parental
 Pity, passes an Act of Oblivion; and, in
 one Instant, cancels a Series of long-conti-
 nued Provocations.—So strong are the Yearn-
 ings of fatherly Affection; that he even
runs, to receive the naked and destitute
 Wretch, to his Arms. And is there a single
 Frown in his Brow, or one upbraiding
 Word on his Tongue?—Instead of *reproach-*
ing him for his odious Excesses; he *falls* on
 his *Neck*, and snatches him to his eager
 Embraces. Instead of rejecting him with
 Indignation, for his undutiful Extravagance;
 he kisses him with Tears of Delight: and
 O 2 rejoices.

rejoices, at his Return from Folly ; as he formerly rejoiced, on the Day of his Nativity.—When this Companion of Harlots opens his Mouth, *before he speaks, the Father bears.* He interrupts him, in the midst of his intended Specch. The Overflowings of his compassionate Heart can brook no Delay. He seems to be *uneasy himself*, till he has made the afflicted *Penitent glad*, with the Assurance of his Acceptance, and the choicest of his Favours. While the poor abashed Offender seeks nothing more, than not to be abhorred ; he is thoroughly reconciled. While he requests no other Indulgence, than only to be treated as the *meanest Servant* ; he is caressed, and honoured, as the *dearest of Children*.—Was there ever so bright and winning a Picture, of the tenderest Mercy ; most freely vouchsafed, to the most unworthy of Creatures ? Yet *thus*, my Soul ; and *thus*, my Fellow-sinner ; will the LORD GOD of everlasting Compassions receive us ; if, with a contrite Spirit, and lively Faith, we turn to him through JESUS CHRIST.

WHERE Sin has abounded, says the Proclamation from the Court of Heaven, Grace doth much more abound.—By this, *Manasseh*,

a Monster of Barbarity, and an Adept in Iniquity, becomes a Child of forgiving Love, and an Heir of immortal Glory.—Behold that bitter and bloody Persecutor *Saul*; when, breathing out Threatenings*, and bent upon Slaughter, he worried the Lambs, and put to Death the Disciples, of the blessed *JESUS*. Who, upon the Principles of human Judgment, would not have pronounced him a Vessel of Wrath, destined to unavoidable Damnation? Nay, would not have been

* *Acts ix. 1.* ΣΑΥΛ ΕΙ ΕΜΠΝΕΩΝ ΑΠΕΙΛΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΦΟΝΟΣ, *Saul yet breathing out Threatening and Slaughter*,—What a Representation is here of a *Mind*, mad with *Rage*, and abandoned to the fiercest Extremes of Barbarity! I scarce know, whether I am more *shocked* at the Persecutor's *savage Disposition*, or *charmed* with the Evangelist's *lively Description*.—The Adverb—*εἰ*—seems to refer to Chap. viii. Ver. 3. and has, in this Connexion, a peculiar Force. The Havock he had committed, the inoffensive Families he had *already* ruined, were not sufficient to assuage his vengeful Spirit. They were only a *Taste*; which, instead of *glutting* the Blood-hound, made him more closely pursue the Track, and more *eagerly pant* for Destruction.—He is *still* athirst for Violence and Murder. So restless and insatiable is his Thirst, that he even *breathes out* Threatening and Slaughter. His Words are Spears and Arrows, and his Tongue a sharp Sword. 'Tis as natural for him to *menace* the Christians, as to breathe the Air.—Nay, they *bleed* every Hour, every Moment, in the Purposes of his rancorous Heart. It is only owing to Want of Power, that every Syllable he utters, every Breath he draws, does not deal about Deaths, and cause some of the innocent Disciples to fall.

ready to conclude; that, if there were heavier Chains, and a deeper Dungeon, in the World of Woe; they must surely be reserved, for such an implacable Enemy of true Godliness? Yet (admire, and adore, the Riches of Almighty Grace!) this *Saul*, is elected into the goodly Fellowship of the Prophets; is numbered with the noble Army of Martyrs; and makes a distinguished Figure, among the glorious Company of the Apostles. — The *Corinthians*, were flagitious even to a Proverb. Some of them wallowed in such abominable Vices, and habituated themselves to such outrageous Acts of Injustice, as were a Reproach to human Nature. Yet, even these Sons of Violence, and Slaves of Sensuality, “ were washed; were sanctified; “ were justified *.” *Washed*, in the precious Blood of a dying Redeemer; *sanctified*, by the powerful Operations of the Blessed Spirit; *justified*, through the infinitely tender Mercies of a gracious God. And Those, who were once the Burden of the Earth, are now the Joy of Heaven, and the Delight of Angels.

* 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 11.

THERE is another Instance in Scripture, which most loudly publishes that sweetest of the Divine Names, “ The LORD, the LORD “ God, merciful and gracious, long-suffer- “ ing, and abundant in Goodness and “ Truth; keeping Mercy for Thousands, “ forgiving Iniquity, Transgression, and Sin.” An Instance this, which exceeds all the former; which exceeds whatever can be imagined; which if I was to forget, the very Stones might cry out, and sound it in my Ears. I mean the Case of those Sinners, who *murdered* the *Prince of Peace*, and LORD of Glory. These Men, could scarce have the Shadow of an Excuse, for their Crime; hardly a Circumstance, to extenuate their Guilt. They were well acquainted with his exemplary Conversation; they had often heard his heavenly Doctrines; they were almost daily Spectators of his unequalled Miracles. They therefore had all possible Reason to *honour* Him, as the most *illustrious* of Beings; and to *receive* Him—into their Houses—their Arms—their very Hearts—as the most *inestimable* of Blessings. Yet, notwithstanding all these engaging Motives to love Him, even above their own Lives; they seize his Person; asperse his Character; drag him before a heathen Tribunal; and

extort a Sentence of Death, against Innocence and Holiness itself. Never was the *vilest Slave*, so contumeliously abused ; nor the most *execrable Malefactor*, so barbarously executed. The Sun was confounded at the shocking Scene ; and one cannot but wonder, how the avenging Lightnings could withhold their Flashes. The Earth trembled at the horrid Deed ; and why, why did it not cleave asunder, and open a Passage, for such Blood-thirsty Miscreants, into the nethermost Hell ? Shall *These* ever hope to obtain *Forgiveness*, from the righteous Judge ? Shall not *These* be consigned over to *inexorable Wrath*, and the *severest Torments*?—
 O the miraculous Effects of Divine Grace !
 O the triumphant Goodness of God our Saviour ! Many even of these impious Wretches, at the Descent of the Holy Ghost, were convinced of their enormous Sin ; were wounded with penitential Remorse ; fled to the Sanctuary of the Cross, and laid hold on the Horns of that Altar ; had their Pardon ratified by the baptismal Seal ; and, continuing in the Apostles Doctrine, were made Partakers of the Kingdom of Heaven. Where they now shine, as so many everlasting *Monuments* of most distinguished *Mercy* ; and receive Beatitude past Utterance, from
 that

that very Redeemer, whom once “with wicked
 “Hands they crucified and flew.”—Well
 might the Prophet cry out, with a pleasing
 Amazement, “Who is a GOD like unto
 “Thee, that pardoneth Iniquity, and
 “passeth by Transgression*?”—Let all Flesh
 remember; let all Flesh rejoice; That with
 the LORD there is *such Mercy*, and with his
 CHRIST *such plentiful Redemption*.

WHAT a grand, and majestic *Dome*, is
 the Sky! And, where are the *Pillars*, that
 support the stately Concave? What Art,
 most exactly true, balanced the Pressure;
 and what Props, of insuperable Strength,
 sustain the Weight? How is that immeasur-
 able Arch *upheld*, unshaken, and unimpaired;
 while so many Generations of busy
 Mortals, have *sunk* and disappeared, as
 Bubbles upon the Stream?—If those Stars
 are of such an amazing Bulk; how are they
 also *fastened*, in their lofty Situation? By what
 Miracle in Mechanics, are so many Thou-
 sands of ponderous Orbs, kept from falling
 upon our Heads; kept from dashing, both
 the World to Pieces, and its Inhabi-
 tants to Death? Are they hung in golden,

* Mic. vii. 18.

or adamantine, *Chains*? Rest they their enormous Load, on *Rocks* of Marble, or *Columns* of Brass? No; they are *pendulous* in fluid *Æther*: and yet, are more immoveably *fixed*, than if the everlasting Mountains lent their Ridges, for a Basis. The Almighty Architect *stretches out the North*, and it's whole starry Train, *over the empty Place*. He *hangs the Earth*, and all the ethereal Globes, *upon nothing**. Yet are their Foundations laid so sure, that they can “ never be moved “ at any time.”

No unfit Representation, to the *sincere* Christian, of his *final* Perseverance †: but

* Job xxvi. 7.

† With regard to the *final Perseverance* of the true Believer; I am sensible, that this Point is not a little controverted.—The Sentiments, which follow, are my *stedfast* Belief. It is by no means proper, in a Work of this Nature, to enter upon a Discussion of the Subject. Neither have I Room, so much as to hint, what might be urged for it's Support.—Let my Reader observe, that I am far from delivering it, as essential to Christianity, or necessary to Salvation. Millions, of the very contrary Conviction, are, I doubt not, high in the Favour of God; and in a growing Meetness, for his heavenly Kingdom. As I blame none for *rejecting*, none, I hope, will be offended with me for *espousing*, this particular Doctrine.—To be of different Opinions, at least in some inferior Instances, seems an unavoidable Consequence of our present State: where *Ignorance*, in Part, cleaves to the *wisest* Minds; and *Prejudice* easily besets the most
such,

such, as points out the Cause, which effects it; and constitutes the Pledge, which ascertains it.—His Nature is all enfeebled. He

impartial Judgments. It may also turn to our common Advantage; and afford Opportunity for exercising the *healing* Virtues, of Moderation, Meekness, and Forbearance.—Let me only be permitted to ask, whether this Tenet does not evidently tend, to establish the *Comfort* of the Christian; to magnify the *Fidelity* of God our Saviour; and whether, far from countenancing Sloth, or encouraging Remissness, to *know* that our Labour shall not be in vain, is not the most prevailing Inducement to *abound* in the Work of the LORD? 1 Cor. xv. 58.

Is any One inclined to examine the Reasons, which have made the Author a Profelyte to this Persuasion? He may find them displayed in the celebrated Paper, delivered by the most eminent Divines of the Church of *England*, at the ever-memorable Synod of *Dordt*—(See *Acta Synod. Dodrac.* Part 2. Pag. 403. of the *Latin* Edition, published in a single Quarto Volume).---Those, who have no Opportunity of consulting the Memoirs of that venerable Assembly, I would refer to the Works of the indefatigable and very learned *Turretin*, or to those of the candid and elegant *Witsius*.----*Turret.* Tom. II. Q. xvi. *Wits.* Oecon. Lib. III. Cap. xiii.

The latest and fullest View of the Point, which I ever remember to have met with, in any of our *English* Writers, is in the *Lime-street Lectures*; which are a Defence of several most important Doctrines of the Gospel, and contained in two Octavo Volumes; the united Labours of *nine* modern Divines; most of whom, are *well* known to the World by their *other* evangelical and useful Writings. In those Lectures, the final Perseverance of the Saints, is very particularly stated, and, to *my* Apprehension at least, most satisfactorily proved; the Arguments usually urged against it, impartially considered, and I cannot but think (with all due Deference to the Judgment of others) unanswerably confuted.

is not able, of himself, to think a good Thought. He has no *visible Safeguard*, nor any *Sufficiency* of his *own*. And yet, whole Legions of formidable Enemies, are combined to compass his Ruin. The *World*, lays unnumbered Snares for his Feet: the *Devil*, is incessantly urging the Siege, by a Multitude of fiery Darts, or wily Temptations: the *Flesh*, like a perfidious Inmate, under Colour of Friendship, and a specious Pretence of Pleasure, is always forward to betray his Integrity.---But, amidst all these threatening Circumstances, of personal Weakness, and imminent Danger, an *invisible Aid* is his Defence. “*I will uphold thee,*” says the blessed GOD, *with the Right Hand of my Righteousness* *.” O comfortable Truth! The Arm, which fixes the Stars in their Orders, and guides the Planets in their Course, is stretched out to preserve the Heirs of Salvation.—“*My Sheep*, adds the “*great Redeemer, are mine; and they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them*

And here (not to swell this Note any farther) I shall only just hint, that the judicious *Hooker* (an Authority, perhaps, as weighty and unexceptionable as any that can well be produced) gives a *solemn Attestation* to this Tenet, in a short Discourse on the Perpetuity of Faith, subjoined to his *Ecclesiastical Polity*. Folio Edition.

* Isa. xli. 10.

“*out of my Hand**.” What Words are these! And did they come from HIM, who hath all Power in Heaven, and on Earth? And were they spoke to every unfeigned, though feeble Follower, of the great Shepherd? Then, *Omnipotence* itself must be *vanquished*; before *they* can be *destroyed*, either by the Seductions of Fraud, or the Assaults of Violence.

IF you ask therefore, *What Security* we have of enduring to the End, and continuing faithful unto Death?—The very *same* that establishes the Heavens, and settles the Ordinances of the Universe. Can *these* be thrown into Confusion †? Then, may the *true Believer* draw back unto Perdition. Can the Sun be dislodged from his Sphere, and rush lawlessly through the Sky? Then, and then only, can the Faith of God’s Elect ‡ be finally overthrown.—Be of good Courage then, my Soul; rely on those Divine Succours, which are so *solemnly stipulated*, so *faithfully promised*. Though thy *Grace* be languid, as the glimmering *Spark*; though the *Overflowings* of *Corruption*, threaten it with total Extinction; yet, since the great JEHOVAH has undertaken to cherish the

* John x. 28. † Jer. xxxi. 35, 36. ‡ Tit. i. 2.
dim

dim Principle, “ many Waters cannot quench “ it, nor all Floods drown it.” Nay, though it were feeble as the *smoking Flax* *, Almighty Goodness stands engaged, to augment the Heat; to raise the Fire, and feed the Flame; till it beam forth, a *Lamp* of immortal *Glory*, in the Heavens.

AND, as to the *Faithfulness* of a covenanting GOD; this may be emblematically seen, in the *Stability* of the heavenly *Bodies*, and the *Perpetuity* of their *Motions* †.—Those

* The *Tenderness*, and *Faithfulness*, of GOD to his People, are finely pictured by the Prophet *Isaiab*, Chap. xlii. Ver. 3. Which Passage, because of it's rich Consolation, and uncommon Beauty, is deservedly adopted by St. *Matthew*, and ingrafted into the System of evangelical Truths.—*He will not himself break*, nor suffer to be broken by any other, *the bruised Reed*; nor quench the *smoking Flax*. Was it possible, to have chosen two more delicate, and expressive Representations? Could any Image, be more significant of a very infirm, and enfeebled *Faith*; than the flexile *Reed*, that bends before every Wind: which, besides it's natural Weakness, is made abundantly weaker by being *bruised*: and so, ready to fall in pieces of itself?—Nor could any thing, with a more pathetical Exactness, describe the extreme Imbecillity, of that other Principle of the Divine Life, *Love*; than the State of the *Flax*, which is but just beginning to burn; and, consequently, liable to be put out by the least Blast: or rather of the *Wick* of the Lamp, when it is not kindled into so much as a glimmering Flame, but only *breathing Smoke*, and uncertain whether it shall take Fire or no. *Matt.* xii. 20.

† *Psal.* cxix. 89, 90.

that

that are *fixed*, continue unalterably in their Station. No injurious Shocks; no Violence of conflicting Elements; are able to displace those *everlasting Hinges*, on which dependent Worlds revolve. Through the whole Flight of Time, they recede not, so much as a Hair's Breadth, from the precise central Point of their respective Systems.—While the *Erratic* perform their prodigious Stages, without any Intermission, or the least Embarrassment. How soon, and how easily, is the most finished Piece of *human Machinery* disconcerted! But all the *celestial Movements*, are so nicely adjusted; all their Operations, so critically proportioned; and their mutual Dependencies, so strongly connected; that they prolong their beneficial Courses, throughout all Ages. While *mighty Cities* are overwhelmed with Ruin, and their very Names lost in Oblivion: While *vast Empires* are swept from their Foundations, and leave not so much as a shadowy Trace of their antient Magnificence: While *all terrestrial Things* are subject to Vicissitude, and fluctuating in Uncertainty: *These* are permanent in their Duration; invariable in their Functions; “not one faileth.”—Who doubts the *constant Succession*, of Day and Night; or the *regular Returns*, of Summer and Winter?

And

And why, O! why shall we doubt the *Veracity* of God, or distrust the *Accomplishment* of his holy Word? Can the Ordinances of Heaven depart? Then only can God forget to be gracious; or neglect the Performance of his Promise.—Nay, our LORD gives us *yet firmer Ground* of Affiance. He affords us a surer Bottom for our Faith, than the *fundamental Laws* of the Universe. “Heaven
“and Earth, He says, may pass away;
“but, not one *Yot* or *Tittle* of his Word,
“shall fall short of it's Purpose.” His sacred Word, whatever may obstruct it; whoever may oppose it; shall be fulfilled to the very uttermost.

O *powerful Word*! How astonishing is it's Efficacy! When this Word was issued forth, a *thousand Worlds* emerged out of nothing. And, should the mighty Orders be repeated, a *thousand more* would spring into Existence. By this Word, the vast System of created Things is *upheld*, in immutable *Constancy*: but, should it give Command, or cease to exert it's Energy; the universal Frame would be dissolved, and all Nature revert to her original Chaos. And this very Word is *pledged* for the Safety, the Comfort, the Happiness of *the Godly*. This inviolable,
this

this Almighty Word, *speaks* in all the *Promises* of the Gospel.—How strangely infatuated are our Souls, that we should value it so little? What Infidels are we in fact, that we should depend upon it no more! Did it *create*, whatever has a Being; and shall it not *work* Faith, in our Breasts? Do unnumbered Worlds, owe their *Support* to this Word; and shall it not be sufficient, to *buoy* up our Souls in Troubles, or establish them in Trials? Is it the *Life* of the Universe, and shall it be a *dead* Letter to Mankind?

IF I wish to be heard, when I implore heavenly Blessings; is not *this Privilege* most clearly *made over* to my Enjoyment, in that well-known Text, “Ask, and it shall be “given you *?”—If I long for the Eternal Comforter, to dwell in my Heart, and sanctify my Nature; have I not an *apparent Title* to this *high Prerogative*, conferred in that sweet assertive Interrogation, “How much “more shall your heavenly Father, give “the Holy Spirit to those that ask him †?”—If I earnestly covet the inestimable Treasures, that are comprised in the great IM-

* Matt. vii. 7.

† Luke xi. 13.

210 CONTEMPLATIONS

MANUEL's Mediation; can I have a *firmer Claim* to the *noble Portion*, than is granted in that most precious Scripture, "Him that cometh to Me, I will in no-wise cast out *."—What Assurance, of being interested in these unspeakable Mercies, would I desire? What *Form of Conveyance*; what *Deed of Settlement*; were it left to my own Option, should I choose? Here is the Word of a King; the King immortal and invisible; all whose Declarations † are Truth itself.—If a Monarch *bestow Immunities* on a Body of Men, and *confirm* them by an authentic *Charter*; no one controverts, no one questions, their Right to the Royal Favours. And why should we suspect the *Validity* of those glorious *Grants*, which are made by the everlasting Sovereign of Nature; which he has also *ratified* by an Oath, and *sealed* with the Blood of his Son?—Corporations may be disfranchised, and Charters revoked. Even Mountains may be removed, and Stars drop from their Spheres. But a Tenure, *founded* on the Divine Promise, is unalienably *secure*; is *lasting*, as Eternity itself.

* John vi. 37.

† ——— If *these* fail,
The pillar'd Firmament is Rottenness,
And Earth's Base built on Stubble.—

MILT. *Comus*.

WE have endeavoured to spell out a *Syllable*, of the eternal Name, in the Wonders of the Sky. We have caught a *Glimpse*, of the Almighty's *Glory*, from the Lustre of innumerable Stars. But, would we behold all his Excellencies, pourtrayed in *full Perfection*; and drawn to the *very Life*; let us attentively consider the REDEEMER.—I observe, there are some Parts of the Firmament, in which the *Stars* seem, as it were, to *cluster*. They are sown thicker, they lie closer, than usual; and strike the Eye, with redoubled Splendor. Like the Jewels on a Crown, they mingle their Beams; and reflect a reciprocal Increase of Brilliancy, on each other.—And is there not such an Assemblage, such a *Constellation* of the *Divine Honours*, most amiably effulgent in the blessed JESUS?

DOES not infinite *Wisdom** shine, with surpassing Brightness, in CHRIST? To the making of a World, there was no Obstacle; but to the Saving of Man, there seemed to be unfurmountable Bars. If the Rebel is suffered to escape; where is the *inflexible Justice*, which denounces “Death as the “Wages of Sin?” If the Offender is tho-

* See the next Note.

roughly pardoned; where is the *inviolable Veracity*, which has solemnly declared, "The Soul that sinneth, shall die?" These awful Attributes are set in terrible Array; and, like an impenetrable Battalion, oppose the Salvation of apostate Mankind. Who can suggest a Method, to *absolve* the traitorous Race, and yet *vindicate* the Honours of Almighty Sovereignty? This is an Intricacy, which, the most exalted of finite Intelligences, are unable to clear.—But, behold the *unsearchable Secret* revealed! revealed in the wonderful Redemption, accomplished by a dying Saviour! So *plainly revealed*, that "He who runs may read;" and even *Babes* understand, what Minds of the deepest Penetration could not contrive.—The Son of God, taking our Nature, obeys the Law, and undergoes Death, in our stead. By this means, the threatened *Curse* is executed, in all it's *Rigour*; and free *Grace* is exercised, in all it's *Riches*. Justice *maintains* it's *Rights*, and, with a steady Hand, administers impartial Vengeance; while Mercy *dispenses* her *Pardons*, and welcomes the repentant Criminal into it's tenderest Embraces. Hereby, the seemingly thwarting Attributes are reconciled: and the Sinner is saved, not only in *full Consistence*, with the Honour of the supreme

preme Perfections ; but to the most *illustrious Manifestation*, of them all.

WHERE does the Divine *Power* * so signally exert itself, as in the *Cross* of CHRIST, and in the *Conquests* of *Grace*?—Our LORD, in his lowest State of Humiliation, gained a more glorious Victory ; than when, through the dividing Sea, and the waste howling Wilderness, He “ rode upon his “ Chariots and Horses of Salvation.” When his Hands were *riveted*, with Irons, to the bloody Tree ; He *disarmed* Death of it's Sting, and *plucked* the Prey from the Jaws of Hell. Then, even then, while He was crucified in *Weakness*, He vanquished the *strong Man*, and subdued our most formidable Enemies : Even then, He spoiled Principalities ; triumphed over the Powers of Darkness ; and led Captivity captive.—And now he is exalted to his heavenly Throne, with what a prevailing Efficacy does his Grace go forth, “ conquering, and to con-

* CHRIST, the *Wisdom* of GOD, and the *Power* of GOD. 1 Cor. i. 24.—To the Intent that now, unto the Principalities and Powers in heavenly Places, might be known by the Church (by the amazing Contrivance, Circumstances, and Accomplishment of it's Redemption) the deep, extensive, and (πολυποικίλος) greatly diversified *Wisdom* of GOD. Eph. iii. 10.

“quer!”—By this, the *Slaves of Sin* are rescued from their Bondage, and restored to the *Liberty of Righteousness*. By this, depraved Wretches, whose Appetites were *sensual*, and their Dispositions *devilish*; are not only renewed, but renewed after the Image of GOD, and made Partakers of a *Divine Nature*. Millions, Millions of lost Creatures are snatched, by the Interposition of Grace, like *Brands* from the Burning; and, translated into everlasting Mansions, shine brighter than the *Stars*, shine bright as the *Sun*, in the Kingdom of their Father.

Would you see a more complete Display of the Divine *Purity*, than the unspotted Firmament; the Spangles of Heaven; or the golden Fountain of Day? Contemplate the same sacred Being. He is the Brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person. In his immaculate Nature; in his heavenly Tempers; in his most holy Life; the *moral Perfections* of the *Deity* are represented, to the highest Advantage*.——Hark! how *Mercy*, with her charming Voice, speaks in all He

* In this Sense, that Saying of our LORD is eminently true, *He that hath seen ME, hath seen the FATHER*. John xiv. 9.

utters.

utters.—See ! how *Benevolence* pours her choicest Stores, in all He *does*. Did ever *Compassion* look so amiably soft, as in those pitying *Tears* ; which swelled his Eyes, and trickled down his Cheeks, to bedew the *Rancour* of his inveterate Enemies ?—Was it possible for *Patience* to assume a Form so lovely ; as that sweetly-winning Conduct, which bore the *Contradiction* of *Sinners* : which intreated the Obstinate, to be reconciled ; besought the Guilty, not to die ?—In a Word ; from other Things, we may collect some *scattered Rays* of *JEHOVAH's* Glory ; but in *CHRIST* they are all *united* ; and beam forth, with the strongest Radiance, the most delightful Effulgence. *Out of Sion*, and in *Sion's* great Redeemer, *bath GOD appeared in perfect Beauty*.

SEARCH then, my Soul, above all other Pursuits, search the *Records* of *redeeming Love*. Let these be the principal Objects of thy Study. Here, employ thyself, with the most unwearied Affiduity.—*In these are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge* *. Such

* *Colos. ii. 3.*—Not a mean Degree, but a *Treasure* ; not one *Treasure*, but *many* ; not many only, but *all* *Treasures*, of true Wisdom, and saving Knowledge ; are

216 CONTEMPLATIONS

Wisdom; as the very Angels, are intensely desirous, to become more intimately acquainted with *: *Such Knowledge*; as qualifies, the Possessor, if not for Offices of Dignity on Earth, yet for the most honourable Advancements in the Kingdom of Heaven. Disunited from which, all Application is but *elaborate Impertinence*; and all Science, no

in CHRIST, and his glorious Gospel.—The *superior Excellency* of those Treasures seems to be finely intimated, in that other Expression—*αποκρυφει*—*hid*; or *laid up*; with the utmost Care, and in a Place of the greatest Safety. Not left at all Adventures, to be *stumbled upon*, by every giddy *Wanderer*; or to *fall into* the Arms, of the yawning *Sluggard*; but, like *Jewels* of the brightest Lustre, or *Riches* of the highest Value, *kept in Store* to adorn and reward the diligent Searcher.

* This, I believe, is the *Import* of the Apostle's Language, though it is not a *literal* Translation of—*εις α επιθυμουσιν αγγελου παρακρυψαι*. 1 Pet. i. 12.—I never had so lively an Apprehension of the beautiful Significancy of the last Word, as when I have attended a *Dissection* of some Part of the *animal* Body. In order to discern the *Minutiæ* of the admirable Frame; the *latent* Wonders of Art and Mechanism; the Eye is so sharpened, and it's Application so *intensely bended*, as gives a very just *experimental Comment* on that expressive Phrase, *παρακρυψαι*.—With such earnest Attention, is the everlasting Gospel contemplated, by the *Angelic* Orders! How much more, if it were possible, does it deserve the devout and incessant Consideration of *human* Minds? Since by *them*, it is not only to be *speculated*, as a bright and ravishing Display of the Divine Attributes; but to be *applied* to their fallen Nature, as a most benign Scheme of *recovering* Grace; as the *sure* and *only* Method of obtaining Life and Immortality.

better

better than *pompous Ignorance*.—These also contain the *faultless Model* of Duty, and the *noblest Motives* to Obedience. Nothing so powerful, to work a lively Faith, and a joyful Hope; as an attentive Consideration, of our LORD's unutterable Merits. Nothing so sovereign, to antidote the pestilential Influence of the World, and deliver our Affections from a Slavery to ignoble Objects; as an habitual Remembrance, of his extreme Agonies. The genuine, the ever-fruitful *Source* of all *Morality*, is the unfeigned Love of CHRIST; and the Cross, the CROSS, is the appointed * *Altar*, from which we may fetch a *Coal* †, to inkindle this sacred Fire.

BEHOLD, therefore, *the Man*; the matchless and stupendous Man; who gave us a Pattern of the most exalted Virtue, and was Himself the Mirror of every Divine Perfection. Examine the Memoirs of his exemplary Conversation. Contemplate that

* *And I, says our LORD, if I be lifted up from the Earth, and extended on the Cross, will draw all Men unto me: will give such a rich and transcendent Display of my Love, as shall constitute the most powerful and prevailing Attractive of theirs.* John xii. 32.

† Alluding to *Isaiah* vi. 6.

Choir

218 CONTEMPLATIONS

Choir of Graces, which were associated in his Mind, and shed the highest Lustre on all his Actions: familiarize to thy Thoughts his heavenly Discourses, and enter into the very Spirit of his *refined Doctrines*: get the one transfused into thy Breast, the other transcribed in thy Life.—Follow Him to the *last Scene* of the most innocent and useful Course, that was ever passed on Earth. Follow Him to *Calvary's* horrid Eminence; to *Calvary's* fatal Catastrophe. Be thy most constant Attention fixed, on that lovely and sorrowful Spectacle. Behold the spotless Victim, nailed to the Tree, and stabbed to the Heart. Hear Him pouring out *Prayers*, for his *Murderers*; before He poured out his *Soul*, for *Transgressors*. See the Wounds, that stream with Forgiveness, and *bleed Balm* for a distempered World. O! see the Justice of the Almighty and his Goodness; his Mercy and his Vengeance; all his *tremendous*, and *gracious* Attributes manifested: manifested with inexpressible Splendor, in that most *ignominious*, and yet *grandest*, of Transactions.

SINCE GOD is so inconceivably great, as these his marvellous Works declare;

Since

*Since the great Sov'reign sends Ten thousand
Worlds,
To tell us, He resides above them all,
In Glory's unapproachable Recess*;*

What an *honourable*, as well as advantageous Employ, is *Prayer*! By *Prayer*, we have *Access* to that most mighty *Potentate*; whose Sceptre sways universal Nature, and whose rich Regalia fill the Skies with Lustre. *Prayer*, places us in his Presence-Chamber; while “the Blood of sprinkling,” procures us a gracious Audience.—Shall I then *blush* to be found prostrate, before the Throne of Grace? Shall I be *ashamed* to have it known; that I offer up social Supplications in the Family, or am conscientious in observing

* For this *Quotation*, and several valuable *Hints*, I acknowledge myself indebted to those beautiful and sublime Poems, intitled *Night-Thoughts*.—Of which I shall only say, That I receive fresh Pleasure, and richer Improvement, from every renewed Perusal. And, I think, I shall have Reason to bless the indulgent Bestower of all Wisdom, for those instructive and animating Compositions, even in my last Moments. Than which, nothing can more emphatically speak their very *superior Excellence*, nor give a more *solid Satisfaction* to their worthy Author. —Happy should I think myself, if these *little Sketches* of contemplative Devotion, might be honoured with the *most inferior* Degree, of the same Success; and receive a Testimony, not from the Voice of Fame, but from the dying Lips of some edified Christian.

my

my private Retirements? Rather, let me *glory* in this unspeakable Privilege. Let me reckon it the *noblest* Posture, to fall low on my *Knees* before his Footstool; and the highest Honour, to enjoy Communion with his most exalted Majesty.—Incomparably more noble, than to *sit*, in *Person*, on the triumphal Chariot; or to *stand*, in *Effigy*, amidst the Temple of Worthies.

How inestimable, in such a View, is that Promise; which so often occurs in the prophetic Writings, and is the crowning Benefit of the new Covenant, *I will be thy God**? —Will this supremely excellent, and Almighty Being, vouchsafe to be my Portion? To settle upon a poor Sinner, not the Heritage of a *County*; not the Possession of the whole *Earth*; but his *own* ever-blessed *Self*? May I then, through his free condescending Grace, and the unknown Merits of his Son, look upon all these infinitely noble Attributes as my Treasure? May I regard the *Wisdom*, which superintends such a Multitude of Worlds, as my *Guide*; the *Power*, which produced, and preserves them in Existence, as my *Guard*; the *Goodness*, which, by an endless Communication of Favours,

* Heb. viii. 10.

renders them all so many Habitations of Happiness, as *my exceeding great Reward?*—What a Fund of Felicity, is included in such a Blessing! How often does the *Israelitish* Prince exult in the Assurance, that this unutterable and boundless Good is his own? Interested in this, he bids Defiance to every Evil, that can be dreaded; and rests in certain Expectation of every Blessing, that can be desired. The *LORD is my Light, and my Salvation; whom then shall I fear?* The *LORD*, with an Air of Exultation, he repeats both his Assurance, and his Challenge, *is the Strength of my Life; of whom then shall I be afraid**? Nothing so effectual, as this appropriating Faith, to inspire a *Dignity of Mind*, superior to transitory Trifles; or to create a *Calmness of Temper*, unalarmed by vulgar Fears, unappalled by Death itself.—*The LORD is my Shepherd*, says the same truly gallant and heroic Personage: *therefore shall I lack nothing†*. How is it possible, He should suffer Want, who has the All-sufficient Fulness for his Supply? So long as unerring Wisdom is capable of *contriving* the Means; and irresistible Power, is able to *execute* them; such a One, cannot fail of being safe and happy; whether he continue

* Psalm xxvii. 1.

† Psalm xxiii. 1.

amidst the Vicissitudes of Time, or depart into the unchangeable Eternity.

HERE, let us stand a Moment, and contemplate this *great* God, together with *ourselves*, in a relative View.—If we reflect on the Works of *material* Nature, their Number incomprehensible, and their Extent unmeasurable: each of them apart, so admirably framed; the Connexions of the Whole, so exquisitely regulated; and all derived, from one and the same glorious Agent—If we recollect the far more noble Accomplishments of elegant Taste, and discerning Judgment; of refined Passions, and exalted Sentiments; which are to be found, among the several Orders of *understanding* Beings: and all of them flowing, in rich Emanations, from the one sole Fountain of intellectual Light—If we farther consider this Author of material Beauty, and moral Excellency, as a *Guardian*, a *Governor*, and *Benefactor* to all his Creatures: supporting their Being, and protecting their Persons, by an ever-watchful Providence; presiding over their Affairs, and causing all Events to terminate in the most extensive Good; heaping, with unremitted Liberality, his Benefits upon every capable Object, and making the whole

whole Circle of Existence a Seminary of Happiness—Is it possible for the human Heart, under such captivating Views, to be *indifferent* towards this ever-blessed Original of all Good? Can Any be so immersed in Stupidity, as to say unto the Almighty—in the Language of an irreligious Temper, and licentious Life, to say? “Depart from
 “Us; we implore not thy Favour; nor
 “desire the Knowledge of thy Ways.”—Wonder, O *Heavens!* be amazed, O *Earth!* and let all the Inhabitants of *both* join their Astonishment, at this unparalleled Complication of disingenuous, ungrateful, and destructive Perverseness!

IF we consider our *own imperfect* State; frail in our Bodies; enfeebled in our Minds; in every Part of our Constitution, and in all the Occurrences of Life, “like a tottering Wall, or a broken Hedge”—If we survey our *indigent* State; without Holiness; without Happiness; our Possession of present Conveniencies, intirely dependent on God’s sovereign Pleasure; yea, forfeited, justly forfeited, and every future Hope, by a Thousand aggravated Iniquities—If we add the various *Disasters* of our Condition; agitated by tumultuous Passions; oppressed
 with

with dispiriting Fears ; held in Suspense by a Variety of perplexing * Cares : liable to Pains, and exposed to Troubles ; Troubles, from every Quarter ; Troubles, of every Kind ;—Can we, amidst so many Wants, under such deplorable Infirmities, and subject to such disastrous Accidents,—can we be unconcerned, whether God's omnipotent Hand, and uncontrollable Will, be *against* Us, or *for* Us ? Imagination itself shudders at the Thought !—Can we rest satisfied, without a *well-grounded* Persuasion, that we are *reconciled* to this supreme LORD, and the Objects of his unchangeable Goodness !—

* All that are conversant with the original Language of the New Testament, are sufficiently apprised, that *this* is the *Significancy* of that important Dissuasive, urged by our LORD, *μη μεριμνατε*, Mat. vi. 25.—I beg Leave, for the sake of the *unlearned* Reader, to observe ; That our Translation, though for the most part faithful and excellent, has here slipped into a very great Impropriety, and misrepresented our Divine Master's Meaning. *Take no Thought for your Body*, is not only not the *true* Sense, but the very *Reverse* of the Scriptural Doctrine. We are required to take a *prudent* and *moderate* Thought, for the Necessaries of Life. The Sluggard, who neglects this decent Precaution, is severely reprimanded ; is sent to one of the meanest Animals, to blush for his Folly, and learn Discretion from her Conduct, *Prov.* vi. 6. Our Saviour's Precept, and the exact Sense of his Expression, is, *Take no anxious Thought* ; indulge no *perplexing* Care, *no such* Care, as may argue an unreasonable *Distrust* of Providence ; or may *rend* and *tear* your Minds with distressing, with pernicious Solicitude.

If

If there be an abandoned Wretch, whose Apprehensions are so fatally blinded; who is so utterly lost to all Sense of his Duty, and of his Interest: let me bewail his *Misery*; while I abhor his Impiety. Bewail his Misery; though Popularity, with her choicest Laurels, adorn his Brow; though Affluence, with her richest Delicacies, load his Table; though half a Nation, or half a World, conspire to call him *happy*.

MAY I, by a *believing Application*, solace myself in this everlasting Source of Love, Perfection, and Joy! Grant me this Request, and I ask no more.—Only, that I may expect, not with a *reluctant Anxiety*, but with a *ready Cheerfulness*, the Arrival of that important Hour; when this Veil of Flesh shall drop, and all the Shadows of Mortality flee away. When I shall no longer complain of *obscure Knowledge*; *languid Affections*; and *imperfect Fruition*—But, shall see the uncreated and immortal Majesty: *see Him*, not in this distant and unaffecting Method, of reasoning from his Works; but with the most clear and direct Intuition of the Mind.—When I shall *love Him*, not with a cold and contracted Spirit; but with the most lively and enlarged Emotions of Gratitude.

—When I shall abundantly *enjoy* the Light of his Countenance; and be united, intimately, inseparably, united to his all-glorious GODHEAD.—Take, ye *Ambitious*, unenvied and un-opposed, take to yourselves the *Toys* of State. May I be enabled to *re-joice* in this blessed Hope; and to *triumph* in that amiable, that adorable, that delightful Name, the LORD MY GOD! And I shall scarce bestow a Thought, on the splendid Pageantry of the World, unless it be to *despise* it's empty Pomp, and to *pity* it's deluded Admirers.

ALL these Bodies, though immense in their Size, and almost infinite in their Multitude, are *obedient* to the Divine *Command*. The GOD of Wisdom “tellet^h their Numbers,” and is intimately acquainted with their various Properties. The GOD of Power “callet^h them all by their Names,” and assigns them whatsoever Office He pleases.—He *marshals* all the starry Legions, with infinitely greater Ease, and nicer Order; than the most expert *General*, arranges his disciplined *Troops*. He appoints their *Posts*; he marks their *Route*; he fixes the Time for their *Return*. The Posts, which he appoints, they occupy, without fail. In
the

the Route, which he settles, they persevere, without the least Deviation. And are punctual to the Instant*, which he fixes for their Return.—He has given them a *Law*, which, through a long Revolution of Ages, shall not be broken: unless his sovereign Will interposes, for it's *Repeal*. Then indeed, their Motions are controuled; their Action is suspended; and their Influence sealed up.—The *Sun*, at his Creation, received a Command to travel through the Heavens. Since which, he has constantly performed the great Circuit; and “rejoiced, “as a Giant, to run his Race.” But, when it was requisite to subserve the Purposes of Divine Love, the Orders are countermanded; the flaming Courier stops his Career; *stands still in Gibeon* †; and, for the Conveniency of the chosen People, holds back the falling

* “The Planets, and all the innumerable Host of heavenly Bodies, perform their Courses and Revolutions, with so much Certainty and Exactness, as never once to fail; but, for almost 6000 Years, come constantly about to the same Period, in the hundredth Part of a Minute.” *Stackhouse's Hist. Bible.*

† This is spoken in Conformity to the Scripture Language, and according to the common Notion. With respect to the Power which effected the Alteration; it is much the same Thing, and alike miraculous; whether the Sun, or the Earth, be supposed to move.

228 CONTEMPLATIONS

Day.—The *Moon* too was dispatched with a Charge, never to intermit her revolving Motion, till Day and Night come to an End. But when the Children of Providence, were to be favoured with an uncommon Continuance of Light, she halts in her March; makes a solemn Pause *in the Valley of Ajalon* *; and delays to bring on her attendant Train of Shadows.—When the Enemies of the LORD are to be discomfited, the *Stars* likewise are levied into the Service; the Stars are armed, and take the Field; *the Stars, in their Courses, fought against Sifera* †.

* *Josh. x. 12, 13.*—The Prophet *Habakkuk*, according to his lofty Manner, celebrates this Event; and points out, in very poetical Diction, the Design of so surprising a Miracle.—*The Sun and Moon stood still in their Habitation: In the Light, the long-continued and miraculous Light, thy Arrows, edged with Destruction, walked on their awful Errand; in the clear Shining of the Day, protracted for this very Purpose, thy glittering Spear, launched by thy People, but guided by thy Hand, sprung to it's Prey. Hab. iii. 11.*

† *Judg. v. 20.*—The scriptural Phrase *fought against*, will, I hope, be a proper *Warrant* for every Expression, I have used on this Occasion.—The Passage is generally supposed to signify, that some very dreadful *Meteors* (which the Stars were thought to influence;) such as fierce Flashes of *Lightning*; impetuous Showers of *Rain*; and rapid Storms of *Hail*; were employed by the Almighty to terrify, annoy, and overthrow the Enemies of *Israel*. If so, there cannot be a more clear and lively Paraphrase on

So

So dutiful is material Nature; so obsequious, in *all* her *Forms*, to her Creator's Pleasure!—The bellowing *Thunders*, listen to his Voice; and the vollied *Lightnings*, observe the Direction of his Eye. The flying *Storm*, and impetuous *Whirlwind*, wear his Yoke. The raging *Waves* revere his Nod: they shake the Earth; and dash the Skies; yet, never offer to pass the Bounds, which He has set.—Even the *planetary Spheres*; though vastly *larger*, than this wide-extended Earth; are, in his Hand, as *Clay* in the Hands of the Potter: though, far *swifter* than the Northern Blast, they sweep the long Tracts of *Æther*; yet, are they *guided* by his *Reins*, and precisely execute whatever He enjoins.—All those enormous *Globes* of *central Fire*, which beam through the boundless Azure; in comparison of which, an Army of Planets, were like a

the Text, than those fine Lines of a *Jewish* Writer.—*His severe Wrath shall HE sharpen for a Sword; and the World shall fight with him against the Ungodly. Then, shall the right-aiming Thunderbolts go abroad; and from the Clouds, as from a well-drawn Bow, shall they fly to the Mark. And Hail-stones, full of Wrath, shall be cast out of a Stone Bow; and the Water of the Sea shall rage against them; and the Floods (as was the Case of the River Kishon) shall cruelly drown them. Yea, a mighty Wind shall stand up against them; and, like a Storm, shall blow them away.* Wild. v. 20, 21, 22, 23.

Swarm of Summer Insects; those, even those, are conformable to his Will, as the *melting Wax* to the impressed Seal.—And if *all*, ALL is *obedient*, throughout the whole Ascent of Things, shall *Man* be the *only Rebel*? Shall our unruly *Appetites*, reject the Government of Almighty Goodness? Shall these headstrong *Passions*, break loose from Divine Restraint; and run wild, in exorbitant Sallies, after their own Imaginations?

O MY Soul, be stung with Remorse, and overwhelmed with Confusion, at such a Thought! Is it not a righteous Thing, that the blessed God should sway the Sceptre, with the most absolute Authority, over all the Creatures, which his Power has formed? Especially over those Creatures; whom his distinguishing Favour, has endued with the noble Principle of Reason, and made capable of a blissful Immortality? Sure, if all the Ranks of inanimate Existence, submit to their Maker's Decree, by the *Necessity* of their Nature; this more excellent Race of Beings, should pay their equal Homage, by the *willing Compliance* of their Affections*.—

* This Argument, I acknowledge, is not *absolutely, conclusive*: But it is *popular* and *striking*. Nor can I think

Come then, all ye *Faculties* of my *Mind* ;
 come, all ye *Powers* of my *Body* ; give up
 yourselves, without a Moment's Delay, with-
 out the least Reserve, to his Governance.
 Stand like dutiful Servants, at his Footstool ;
 in an everlasting Readiness, to *do* whatsoever
 He requires ; to *be* whatsoever he appoints :
 To further, with *united* Efforts, the Purposes
 of his Glory in this earthly Scene : or else
 to *separate*, without Reluctance, at his Sum-
 mons ; the *one*, to sleep in the silent Dust ;
 the *other*, to advance his Honour, in some

myself obliged, in such a Work ; where *Fancy* bears a
 considerable Sway ; to proceed always with the Caution
 and Exactness, of a *Disputer* in the *Schools*. If there be
 some Appearance of Analogy, between the Fact and the
 Inference, it seems sufficient for my Purpose ; though the
 Deduction should not be necessary, or strictly syllogistical.
 —One of the *Apostolic Fathers* has an affecting and truly
 sublime Paragraph, which runs intirely in this Form :
 ΗΛΙΟΣ ΤΕ ΚΑΙ ΣΕΛΗΝΗ, ΑΣΤΕΡΩΝ ΤΕ ΧΟΡΟΙ, ΚΑΤΑ ΤΗΝ ΔΙΑΤΑΓΗΝ
 ΑΥΤῆς ΕΝ ΟΜΟΝΟΙΑ, ΔΙΧΑ ΠΑΣΗΣ ΠΑΡΕΚΒΑΣΕΩΣ, ΕΞΕΛΙΣΣΑΣΙΝ
 ΤΗΣ ΕΠΙΕΤΑΓΜΕΝΗΣ ΑΥΤΟΙΣ ΟΡΙΣΜΗΣ. *The Sun, the Moon,*
and the starry Choir, without the least Deviation, and with
the utmost Harmony, perform the Revolutions appointed them
by the supreme Decree. From which Remark, and abun-
 dant of other similar Instances, observable in the Oeco-
 nomy of Nature ; he exhorts Christians, to a *cordial Un-*
animity among themselves, and a *dutiful Obedience* to God.
Vid. Clem. Roman. 1 Ep. ad Corinth. Sect. 20. — See also a
 beautiful Ode in Dr. *Watts's* Lyric Poems, intituled, *The*
Comparison and Complaint, which turns intirely upon this
 very Thought.

remoter Colony of his Kingdom.—Thus, may I join with all the Works of the LORD, in all Places of his Dominion, to recognize his universal Supremacy ; and proclaim Him *Sovereign of Souls*, as well as *Ruler of Worlds*.

AT my first coming abroad, all these *Luminaries* were totally *eclipsed*, by the overpowering Lustre of the Sun. They were all placed in the very same Stations ; and played the same sprightly Beams ; yet, not one was seen. As the Daylight wore away, and the sober Shades advanced ; *Hesperus*, that leads the starry Train, disclosed his radiant Forehead, and caught my Eye. While I stood gazing, on his bright and beautiful Aspect, others peeped through the blue Curtains. Scarce had I turned to observe, these fresh Emanations of Splendor ; but others dropt the Veil ; others stole into View. When lo ! faster and more numerous, Multitudes sprung from Obscurity ; they poured, in shining Troops, and in sweet Confusion, over all the empyrean Plain. Till the Firmament seemed, like one vast Constellation ; and “ a Flood of Glory burst from all the “ Skies.”

Is not such the *Rise*, and such the *Progress*, of a true *Conversion*; in the prejudiced Infidel, or inattentive Sinner? In the Period of his vainer Years, a Thousand *interesting Truths*, lay utterly *undiscovered*; a Thousand *momentous Concerns*, were intirely *disregarded*. But, when divine Grace dissipates the delusive Glitter, which dazled his Understanding, or beguiled his Affections; then, He begins to discern, dimly to discern, the Things that belong to his Peace. Some powerful Admonition of Scripture, darts Conviction into his Soul; as the Rays of a Star, pierce the Gloom of Night. Then, perhaps, another awful, or chearing Text, flings Terror, or diffuses Comfort; a *Threatening* alarms his Fears, or a *Promise* awakens his Hopes. This, possibly, is succeeded by some very *impressive* Dispensation of Providence; or improved by some edifying, and *instructive* Conversation. All which is fastened, as to it's Continuance; and enlarged, as to it's Influence; by a diligent Study of the sacred Word. By this means, new Truths continually pour their Evidence; new Scenes of refined and exalted, but hitherto unknown Delight, address Him with their Attractives. New Desires take Wing; new Pursuits are set on Foot. A new Turn of Mind forms his

his Temper ; a new Habit of Conversation regulates his Life. Old Things are passed away ; and “ He, who was sometime Dark-
“ nefs, is now Light, and Life, and Joy in
“ the LORD.”

THE more attentively I view the crystal Concave, the greater *Number* of Luminaries I discern. Abundance of minuter Lights, that lay concealed from a *superficial Notice*, are visible on a *closer Examination*. Especially in those Tracts of the Sky, which are called the *Galaxy* ; and are distinguishable, by a sort of milky Path. There, they are crowded, rather than disseminated. The Region seems to be all on a Blaze, with their blended Rays. They shine thick as *Dew-drops*, on the Face of the *Morning*.—Besides this vast Profusion, which the prying Eye discovers ; were I to make my Survey, from any other Part of the Globe, that lies nearer the Southern Pole ; I should behold a *new Choir* of starry Bodies, which have never appeared in our *Hemisphere*.—And were I, either *Here* or *There*, to view the Firmament with the *Virtuoso's Glass* ; I should find a prodigious Multitude of flaming Orbs, that, immersed in Depths of Æther, escape the keenest

keenest unassisted Sight *—And yet, in these various Situations; even with the Aid of the Telescopic Tube; I should not be able to descry the Half, perhaps not a *Thousandth Part*, of those illustrious Bodies, which the vast expansive Heavens contain †.—So, the more diligently I pursue my Search, into those Oracles of eternal Truth, the *Scriptures*; I perceive a wider, a deeper, an ever increasing *Fund of spiritual Treasures*. I perceive the diviner Strokes of Wisdom, and the richer Displays of Goodness; the more transcendent Excellency of the Messiah, and a more deplorable Vileness in fallen Man;

* Come forth, O Man, yon azure Round survey,
And view those Lamps, which yield eternal Day.
Bring forth thy Glasses: Clear thy wond'ring Eyes:
Millions beyond the former Millions rise:
Look farther:—Millions more blaze from remoter
Skies. }

See an ingenious Poem, intituled, The Universe.

† How noble, considered in this View, are the Celebrations of the Divine Majesty, which frequently occur in the sacred Writings! *It is the LORD that made the Heavens.* Psal. xcvi. 5.—What a prodigious Dignity, does such a Sense of Things give, to that devout Ascription of Praise! *Thou, even Thou, art LORD alone; Thou hast made Heaven, the Heaven of Heavens, with all their Host.* Nehem. ix. 6.—And how inimitably sublime is that beautiful Climax, in the inspired Hymn! *Praise HIM, Sun and Moon: Praise Him, all ye Stars of Light: Praise Him, ye Heavens of Heavens.* Psal. cxlviii. 3, 4.

236 CONTEMPLATIONS

a more immaculate Purity in God's Law, and more precious Privileges in his Gospel. And yet, after a Course of Study, ever so assiduous ; ever so prolonged ; I should have Reason, to own myself, a mere *Babe* in heavenly Knowledge ; or, at most, but a *puerile* Proficient, in the *School* of CHRIST.

AFTER all my most accurate Inspection, those *starry Orbs* appear but as *glittering Points* ; and even the *Planets*, though so much nearer our earthly Mansion, seem not to exceed the Size of *flaming Bullets*. If then, we have such *imperfect Apprehensions*, of visible and material Things ; how much more scanty and inadequate, must be our Notions of invisible and immortal Objects ! — We behold the Stars ; and, though every one is incomparably *bigger*, than this whole Earth ; yet they *dwindle*, upon our Survey, into the most diminutive Forms. Thus, we see by Faith the Glories of the blessed JESUS ; the atoning Efficacy of his Death ; the justifying Merit of his Righteousness ; and the Joys, which are reserved for the Godly. But alas ! even our most *exalted* Ideas, are vastly *below* the Truth : As much below the Truth ; as the Report, which our Eyes make of those celestial Edifices,

fices, is inferior to their real Grandeur.—Should we take in all the *magnifying* Assistances, which Art has contrived; those luminous Bodies, would elude our Skill, and seem as *small* as ever. Should an Inhabitant of Earth, travel towards the Cope of Heaven; and be carried forwards, in his aerial Journey, more than a Hundred and Sixty Millions of Miles*; even in that advanced Situation, those *Oceans of Flame*, would look no larger, than *radiant Specks*.—In like manner, conceive ever so magnificently, of the Redeemer's *Honours*; and of the *Bliss*, which he has purchased for his People; yet, you will fall short. Raise your Imagination *higher*; stretch your Invention *wider*; give them *all* the *Scope*, that a soaring and excursive Fancy can take; still, your Conceptions will be extremely *disproportionate*, to their genuine Perfections.—Vast are the Bodies, which roll in the Expanse of Heaven; vaster far are those Fields of Æther, through which they run their endless Round; but

* This, incredible as it may seem, is not a *mere Supposition*, but a *real Fact*. For, about the Tenth of December, we are above 160,000,000 of Miles nearer the Northern Parts of the Sky, than we were at the Tenth of June. And yet, with regard to the Stars situate in that Quarter, we perceive no *Change* in their *Aspect*, nor any *Augmentation* of their *Magnitude*.

238 CONTEMPLATIONS

the Excellency of JESUS, and the Happiness laid up for his Servants, are greater than *either* ; than *both* ; than *all*. An inspired Writer calls one, " The unsearchable Riches of CHRIST ;" and styles the other, " An exceeding great and eternal Weight of Glory."

IF those Stars, are so many inexhaustible *Magazines of Fire*, and immense *Reservoirs of Light* ; there is no Reason to doubt, but they have some very *grand Uses*, suitable to the Magnificence of their Nature. To specify, or explain, the particular Purposes they answer ; is altogether impossible, in our present State of Distance and Ignorance. This however, we may clearly discern ; that they are disposed in such a Manner as is most *pleasing*, and *serviceable*, to Mankind.—They are not placed at such an *infinite Remove*, as to lie beyond our Sight ; neither are they brought *so near* our Abode, as to annoy us with their Beams. We see them shine on every Side ; and the deep Azure, that serves them as a Ground, heightens their Splendor. But, their Influence is gentle, and their Rays are destitute of Heat. So that we are favoured with the View, of a Multitude of fiery Globes ; without any
Risque,

Risque, either to the *Coolness* of our *Night*, or the *Quiet* of our *Repose*.—Who can sufficiently admire that immense Benignity; which, on our Account, *strews* the *Earth* with Blessings of every Kind; and vouchsafes to make the *very Heavens*, subservient to our Delight?

BUT it is not solely to adorn the Roof of our Palace, with costly Gildings; that God commands the celestial Luminaries, to glitter through the Gloom. We also reap considerable Benefits, from their Ministry.—They *divide* our *Time*, and fix it's solemn Periods. They settle the *Order* of our *Works*; and are, according to the Destination mentioned in sacred Writ, “for Signs, and for Seasons; “for Days, and for Years.” The Returns of Heat and Cold alone, would have been too precarious a Rule. But these radiant Bodies; by the *Variation*, and also by the *Regularity*, of their Motions; afford a Method of calculating, absolutely certain, and sufficiently obvious. By this, the *Farmer* is instructed, when to commit his Grain to the Furrows, and how to conduct the Operations of Husbandry. By this, the *Sailor* knows when to proceed on his Voyage, with least Peril; and how to carry on the
the

the Business of Navigation, with most Success.

WHY should not the Christian, the *Probationer* for *Eternity*, learn from the same Monitors, to *number*, for nobler Purposes, his *Days*; and duly to transact the grand, grand Affairs, of his final Salvation? Since God has appointed so many bright Measurers of our Time, to determine it's larger Periods, and to minute down it's ordinary Stages; sure, *this* most strongly inculcates it's *Value*, and should powerfully prompt us to *improve* it.—Behold! the supreme Lord marks the Progress of our Life, in that most *conspicuous Kalendar* above. And does not such an Ordination tell us, in the most emphatical Language, That it is given for *Use*, not for *Waste*? That no Portion of it is delivered, but under a strict Account; that all of it is entered, as it passes, in the Divine Register; and, therefore, that the Stewards of such a Talent, are to expect a future Reckoning?—Behold! the very Heavens are bidden to be the *Accomptants*, of our Years, and Months, and Days. O! may this induce us to manage them, with a vigilant Frugality; to part with them, as Misers with their *boarded Treasure*, warily and circumspectly; and,

and, if possible, as Merchants with their *rich Commodities*, not without their Equivalent, either in personal Improvement, or social Usefulness !

How *bright* the starry Diamonds shine ! The Ambition of Eastern Monarchs could imagine no Distinction, more noble and sublime, than that of being likened to those beaming Orbs *.—They form Night's *richest Dress* ; and sparkle upon her sable Robe, like Jewels of the finest Lustre. Like Jewels ! I wrong their Character. The lucid Stone has no Brilliancy ; quenched is the Flame even of the golden Topaz ; compared with those glowing Decorations of Heaven.—How *widely* are their radiant Honours *diffused* ! No Nation so remote, but sees their Beauty, and rejoices in their Usefulness. They have been admired by all preceding Generations ; and every rising Age, will gaze on their Charms, with renewed Delight.—How *animating*, then, is that *Promise*, made to the faithful Ministers of the Gospel ! “ They that turn many to Righteousness, shall shine as the Stars for ever and ever †.” Is not this a most winning En-

* Numb. xxiv. 17. Dan. viii. 10. † Dan. xii. 3.

couragement, “to spend and be spent,” in the Service of Souls? Methinks, the Stars *beckon*, as they *twinkle*. Methinks, they shew me their Splendors, on purpose to awaken my *Alacrity*, in the *Race* set before me; on purpose to enliven my *Activity*, in the *Work* that is given me to do.—If Honour has any Charms; if true Glory, the Glory which cometh from God, is any Attractive; there cannot be a more powerful Incitement, to exercise all *Affiduity* in my holy Vocation. Therefore, when *Zeal* becomes *languid*; let me have recourse to these Lamps of Heaven; and *rekindle* it's *Ardor*, at their inextinguishable Fires.

OF the *Polar Star*, it is observable; that while other Luminaries *alter* their Situation, this seems invariably *fixed**. While other Luminaries, now, mount the Battlements of Heaven, and appear upon Duty; now, retire beneath the Horizon, and resign, to a fresh Set, the Watches of the Night; this

* I speak in Conformity to the *Appearance* of the Object. For, though this remarkable Star revolves round the Pole, it's *Motion* is so *slow*, and the *Circle* it describes so *small*; as render both the Revolution, and Change of Situation, hardly perceivable.

never

never departs from its Station. This, in every Season, maintains an *uniform Position*; and is always to be found, in the same Tract of the Northern Sky.—How often has *this* beamed bright Intelligence on the *Sailor*; and conducted the Keel, to it's desired Haven! In early Ages, those that went down to the Sea in Ships, and occupied their Business in great Waters, had scarce any other *sure Guide* for their wandering Vessel. This therefore they viewed, with the most solicitous Attention. By this, they formed their Observations, and regulated their Voyage. When this was obscured by Clouds, or enveloped in Mists; the trembling Mariner was *bewildered*, on the watry Waste. His Thoughts fluctuated, as much as the floating Surge; and he knew not, *where* he was advanced, or *whither* he should steer. But, when this auspicious Star broke through the Gloom; it dissipated the *Anxiety* of his Mind, and cleared up his *dubious Passage*. He re-assumed, with Alacrity, the Management of the Helm; and was able to shape his Course, with some tolerable Degree of Satisfaction and Certainty.

SUCH, only much *clearer* in it's *Light*, and much *surer* in it's *Direction*, is the *Holy Word* of God, to those Myriads of intellectual Beings, who are bound for the eternal Shores: and, embarked in a Vessel of frail Flesh, are to pass the Waves of this perilous World. In all *Difficulties*, those sacred Pages shed an *encouraging Ray*; in all *Uncertainties*, they suggest the *right Determination*, and point out a *proper Procedure*. And, what is still a more inestimable Advantage; they, like the Star which conducted the Eastern Sages, make *plain* our Way to the Redeemer. They display his unspeakable Merits; discover the Method of being interested in his Atonement; and lead the weary Soul, *tossed* by Troubles, and *scattered* by Temptations, to that only *Harbour* of peaceful Repose.—Let us, therefore, attend to this *unerring Directory*, with the same Constancy of Regard, as the Sea-faring Man observes his Compass. Let us become as thoroughly acquainted with this *sacred Chart*, as the Pilot is with every trusty Mark, that gives Notice of a lurking Rock; and with every open Road, that yields a safe Passage into the Port. Above all, let us *commit* ourselves to this *infallible Guidance*, with the same implicit Resignation; let us conform to it's Divine Precepts,

cepts, with the same sedulous Care; as the Children of *Israel*, when sojourning in the trackless Desert, followed the Pillar of Fire, and the Motions of the miraculous Cloud.—So, will it introduce us, not into an *earthly Canaan*, flowing with Milk and Honey; but into an *immortal Paradise*, where is the Fullness of Joy, and where are Pleasures for evermore. It will introduce us into those happy, happy Regions, where *our Sun shall no more go down, nor our Moon withdraw itself; for the LORD shall be our everlasting Light, and the Days of our Mourning, together with the Fatigues of our Pilgrimage, shall be ended**.

I PERCEIVE a great *Variety*, in the Size and Splendor of those Gems of Heaven. Some, are of the first Magnitude; others, of an inferior Order. Some *glow*, with intense Flames; others *glimmer*, with fainter Beams. Yet, *all are beautiful*; all have their peculiar Lustre, and distinct Use; all tend, in their different Degrees, to enamel the Cope of Heaven, and embroider the Robe of Night.—This Circumstance is remarked by an Author, whose Sentiments are a Source of Wisdom, and the very Standard of Truth.

* *Isai. lx. 20.*

246 CONTEMPLATIONS

“ One Star, says the Apostle of the *Gentiles*,
 “ *differeth* from another Star in Glory : So
 “ also is the Resurrection of the Dead.”

IN the World above, are various *Degrees* of Happiness, various Seats of Honour. Some will rise to more illustrious Distinctions, and richer Joys *. Some, like Vessels of ample Capacity, will admit more copious Accessions of Light and Excellence. And yet, there will be no Want, *no Deficiency*, in any ; but a *Fulness* both of Divine Satisfaction, and personal Perfections. *Each* will enjoy *all* the Good ; and be adorned with *all* the Glory ; that his Heart can wish, or his Condition receive.—None will know what it is, to envy. Not the least Malevolence ; nor the least Selfishness ; but everlasting Friendship prevails, and a mutual Complacency in each other's Delight. Love, *cordial Love*, will give every *particular* Saint, a *Participation* of all the Fruitions † ; that are diffused through the whole Assembly of the Blessed.—None will *eclipse*, but

* 1 Cor. xv. 41, 42. The great Mr. Mead prefers the Sense here given ; and the learned Dr. Hammond admits it, into his Paraphrase. Whose joint Authority, though far from excluding any *other*, yet is a sufficient Warrant for *this* Application of the Words.

† *Tolle Invidiam, & tuum est quod habeo : Tolle Invidiam, & meum est quod habes.* Augustine.

rather

rather *reflect* Light upon another. A sweet Interchange of Rays subsists; all enlightened by the great Fountain, and all enlightening one another. By which reciprocal Communication of Pleasure and Amity, each will be continually *receiving from*; each incessantly *adding to*; the general Felicity.

HAPPY, supremely happy they, who obtain the most humble Portion in the celestial Mansions. Better to be a *Door-keeper* in those “Ivory Palaces*,” than to fill the most *gorgeous Throne* on Earth. The very lowest Place at God’s Right-hand, is distinguished Honour, and consummate Delight—O! that we may anticipate something of that blissful State, while we remain in our Banishment below! May we, *by rejoicing* in the superior Prosperity of another, make it *our own*! And, provided the *general Result*, is Harmony, be content, be pleased, with *whatsoever Part* is assigned to our Share, in the universal Choir of Affairs.

WHILE I am considering the heavenly Bodies, I must not intirely forget those fundamental Laws of our modern Astronomy,

* Psal. xlv. 8.

Projection, and *Attraction*. One of which is the all-combining Cement, the other is the ever-operative Spring, of the mighty Frame. —In the Beginning, the all-creating FIAT impressed a proper Degree of Motion, on each of those whirling Orbs. Which, if not controuled, would have carried them on, in strait Lines, and to endless Lengths; till they were even lost, in the Abyfs of Space. But, the *gravitating* Property being added to the *projectile* Force, determined their Courses to a *circular* * Form; and obliged the reluctant Rovers, to perform their destined Rounds.—Were either of those

* I am aware, the planetary Orbits are not strictly *circular*, but rather *elliptical*. However, as they are but a small Remove from the perfectly rotund Figure; and partake of it incomparably more than the Trajectories of the Comets; I choose to represent the Thing in this View, Especially, because the Notion of a Circle is so much more intelligible to the Generality of Readers, than that of an Ellipsis; and because I laid it down for a Rule, not to admit any such *abstruse* Sentiment, or *barbarous* Expression, as should demand a *painful Attention*, instead of raising an *agreeable Idea*. For which Reason, I have avoided *technical Terms*; have taken no Notice of *Jupiter's Satellites*, or *Saturn's Ring*; have not so much as mentioned the Names of the Planets, nor attempted to wade into any Depths of the Science: lest, to those who have no Opportunity of using the *Telescope*, or of acquainting themselves with a *System of Astronomy*, I should propound *Riddles*, rather than display *entertaining* and *edifying* Truths.

Causes

Causes to suspend their Action, all the harmoniously moving Spheres would degenerate into *torpid Masses*; and, falling into the central Fire, be *burnt to Ashes*: Or else would exorbitate into *wild Confusion*; and each, by the Rapidity of it's Whirl, be *dissipated* into *Atoms*. But, the impulsive and attractive Energy, being most nicely attuned to each other; and, under the immediate Operation of the Almighty, exerting themselves in perpetual Concert; the various Globes run their radiant Races, without the least Interruption or Deviation. So as to create the alternate Changes, of *Day* and *Night*; and distribute the useful Vicissitudes, of *succeeding Seasons*. So as to answer all the great Ends of a gracious Providence; and procure every comfortable Convenience, for universal Nature.

DOES not this Constitution of the *material*, very naturally lead the Thoughts, to those grand Principles of the *moral* and *devotional* World; *Faith* and *Love*?—These are often celebrated by the inspired Apostle, as a comprehensive Summary of the Gospel *. These inspirit the Breast, and regulate the Progress, of each *private Christian*. These

* Col. i. 4. Phil. ver. 5.

250 CONTEMPLATIONS

unite the *whole Congregation* of the Faithful to GOD, and one another: To GOD, the great Centre, in the Bonds of Gratitude and Duty; to one another, by a reciprocal Intercourse of brotherly Affections, and friendly Offices.—If you ask, Why is it impossible for the true Believer, to live at all Adventures? to *stagnate*, in a listless *Inactivity*; or to indulge the *extravagant Excursions*, of lawless Inclination?—It is owing to “his Faith, working by Love*.” He verily trusts, that CHRIST has sustained the Infamy, and endured the Torment, due to his Sins. He firmly relies on that Divine Propitiation, for the Pardon of all his Guilt; and humbly expects everlasting Salvation, as the Purchase of his Saviour’s Merits. This produces such a Set of grateful Sentiments, and such a Spirit of unfeigned Thankfulness, as animate his whole Behaviour. He cannot, he cannot *run* to *Excess* of Riot; because Love to his adorable Redeemer, like a strong, but filken *Curb*, sweetly *restrains* him. He cannot, he cannot lie *lulled* in a *lethargic Indolence*; because Love to the same infinite Benefactor, like a pungent, but endearing *Spur*, pleasingly *excites* him.—In a Word; Faith supplies the powerful Impulse,

* Gal. v. 6.

while

while Love gives the determining Byas; and leads the willing Feet, through the whole Circle of GOD's Commandments. By the united Efficacy of these *heavenly Graces*, the Christian Conduct is preserved, in the Uniformity and Beauty of Holiness; as by the blended Power of those *Newtonian Principles*, the solar System revolves, in a steady and magnificent Regularity.

How admirable, how extensive, how diversified, is the Force of this single Principle of *Attraction* * !—This penetrates the very Essence of all Bodies, and diffuses itself to the remotest Limits of the mundane System—By this, the vast Worlds of Matter hang *self-balanced* on their Centres; and, though Orbs of immense Magnitude, require nothing, but this amazing Property, for their Support. To this we ascribe a Phænomenon, of a very different Kind, the *Pressure* of the Atmosphere: which, though a yielding and expansive Fluid; yet constipated by an attractive Energy; surrounds the whole Globe, and incloses every Creature, as it were with a tight Bandage. An Expedient

* I mean the Attraction both of *Gravitation*, and *Cohesion*.

this,

this, absolutely necessary to preserve the Texture of our Bodies ; and indeed, to maintain every Species of Animal Existence.

—Urged by this wonderful Impetus, the *Rivers* circulate, with a never-failing Current, along the Veins of the Earth ; rolling, with torrent Rapture, down the Steeps, or softly ebbing through the Plains. Impelled by the same mysterious Force, the *nutritious Juices* are detached from the Soil ; and, ascending the Trees, find their Way through Millions of the finest Meanders, in order to transfuse vegetative Life into all the Branches.—This confines the *Ocean*, within proper Bounds : Though the Waves thereof roar ; though they toss themselves, with all the Madness of indignant Rage ; yet, checked by this potent, this inevitable Curb, they are unable to pass even the slight Barrier of Sand. To this the *Mountains* owe that unshaken Firmness, which laughs at the Shock of careering Winds ; and bids the Tempest, with all it's mingled Horrors, impotently rave.—By virtue of this invisible Mechanism ; without the Aid of Crane or Pully, or any Instrument of human Device ; many thousand *Tons* of *Water* are raised, every Moment, into the Regions of the Firmament. By this, they continue *suspended* in
thin

thin Air, without any capacious Cistern, to contain their Substance; or any massy Pillars, to sustain their Weight. By this same variously acting Power, they *drop down* again in gentle Falls of Dew, or are *precipitated* in copious Showers of Rain; they *slide* into the Fields in fleecy Flights of Snow, or are *darted* upon the Houses in clattering Storms of Hail.—This occasions the strong *Cohesion* of solid Bodies: without which, our large Machines could exert themselves with no Vigour; and the nicer Utensils of Life, would elude our Expectations of Service. This affords a Foundation, for all those delicate or noble *mechanic Arts*; which furnish Mankind with numberless Conveniences, both of Ornament and Delight.—In short; this is the prodigious *Ballast*, which composes the Equilibrium, and constitutes the Stability of Things: this, the great *Chain*, which forms the Connexions of universal Nature; and the mighty *Engine*, which prompts, facilitates, and, in good measure, accomplishes almost all her Operations.—O! what *complicated* Effects, from a *single Cause* *! What Profusion, amidst

* See another remarkable Instance of this Kind, in the *Reflections on a Flower-Garden*, p. 182.—together with a fine Observation, quoted in the corresponding Note.

254 CONTEMPLATIONS

Frugality ; an unknown Profusion of Benefits, with the utmost Frugality of Expence !

AND what *is* this Attraction ? Is it a Quality, in it's Existence, inseparable from *Matter* ; and, in it's Acting, independent on the DEITY ?—Quite the reverse. It is the very *Finger* of GOD : the constant Impression of Divine Power : a Principle, neither innate in Matter, nor intelligible by Mortals.—Does it not, however, bear a considerable Analogy to the *Agency* of the HOLY GHOST, in the Christian Oeconomy ? Are not the gracious Operations of the Blessed Spirit, thus *extensive*, thus *admirable*, thus *various* ?—That Almighty Being transmits his Gifts, through every Age ; and communicates his Graces, to every Adherent on the Redeemer. All, either of illustrious Memory, or of beneficial Tendency ; in a Word, “ all the Good that is “ done upon Earth, He doth it himself.” Strong in *his* Aid, and in the Power of *his* Might, the Saints of all Times, have trod Vice under their Feet ; have triumphed over this abject World ; and conversed in Heaven, while they dwelt on Earth. *Not I, but the Grace of GOD which was with me,*

me *, is the unanimous Acknowledgement of them All.—By the same kindly Succours, the whole Church is still enlightened, quickened, and governed. By his benign Influences, the Scales of *Ignorance*, fall from the Understanding; the Leprosy of *evil Concupiscence*, is purged from the Will; and the Fetters, the more than adamantine Fetters, of *habitual Iniquity*, drop off from the Conversation. He breathes even upon dry Bones †, and they live: they are animated with Faith; they pant with ardent and heavenly Desire; they exercise themselves in all the Duties of Godliness.—His real, though secret, Inspiration, *dissolves* the Flint in the impenitent Breast; and *binds* up the Sorrows, of the broken Heart: *raises* the Thoughts *high*, in the Elevations of holy Hope; yet *lays* them *low*, in the Humiliations of inward Abasement: *steels* the Soul with impenetrable Resolution, and persevering Fortitude; and, at the same time, *softens* it into a Dove-like Meekness, and *melts* it in penitential Sorrow.

WHEN I contemplate those *ample* and amazing *Structures*, erected in endless Magnificence, over all the æthereal Plains:—

* I Cor. xv. 10.

† See that beautiful Piece of sacred and allegorical Imagery displayed, *Ezek. xxxvii.*

When

256 CONTEMPLATIONS

When I look upon them as so many splendid *Repositories of Light*, or fruitful *Abodes of Life*:—When I remember, that, in all Probability, there are Orbs, vastly *more remote*, than those which appear to our unaided Sight; Orbs, whose *Effulgence*, though travelling ever since the Creation, is *not yet arrived* upon our Coasts*:—When I stretch my Thoughts to the innumerable Orders of Being, which inhabit all those spacious Systems; from the *loftiest Seraph*, that furrounds the Throne; to the *puny Nations*, which tinge with Blue

* If this Conjecture (which has no less a Person than the celebrated Mr. *Huygens* for it's Author) concerning *unseen Stars*, be true; If, to this Observation, be added, what is affirmed by our skilful Astronomers; that the *Motion* of the *Rays* of Light is so *surprisingly swift*, as to pass through Ten Millions of Miles in a single Minute—How *vast!* *beyond Imagination* vast and unmeasurable, are the *Spaces* of the *Universe!*—While the Mind is distended with the *grand Idea*; or, rather, while she is dispatching her ablest Powers of piercing *Judgment*, and excurfive *Fancy*; and finds them all *drop short*; all baffled by the amazing Subject: Permit me to apply that beautiful Exclamation, and noble Remark—

——Say, proud Arch,
Built with Divine Ambition; in Disdain
Of Limit built; built in the Taste of Heav'n!
Vast Concave! Ample Dome! Wast thou design'd
A meet Apartment for the DEITY?
Not so: That Thought alone thy State impairs:
Thy *Lofty* sinks; and shallows thy *Profound*;
And streightens thy *Diffusive*.—

Night-Thoughts, N^o IX.

the

the Surface of the Plum *, or mantle the standing Pool with Green:—O ! how various are the Links, in this immense Chain ! How vast the Gradations, in this universal Scale of Existence ! Yet *all* these, however vast and various, are the *Work* of God's *Hand*, and are *full* of his *Presence*.

HE rounded in his Palm those dreadfully large Globes, which are pendulous in the Vault of Heaven. He kindled those astonishingly bright Fires, which fill the Firmament with a Flood of Glory. By him they are suspended in *fluid* Æther, and cannot be *shaken* : By Him they dispense a *perpetual* Tide of Beams, and are never *exhausted*.—He formed, with inexpressible Nicety, that exquisitely fine Collection of *Tubes* ; that unknown Multiplicity of subtle *Springs* ; which organize, and actuate, the Frame of the minutest Insect. He bids the crimson Current roll ; the vital Movements play ; and

* Ev'n the *blue* Down the purple Plum surrounds,
A *living World*, thy failing Sight confounds.
To HIM a peopled Habitation shews,
Where Millions taste the Bounty GOD bestows.

*See a very beautiful, sublime, and instructive
Poem, filed—DEITY.*

258 CONTEMPLATIONS

associates a *World of Wonders*, even in an *animated Point**.—In all these, is a rich Exhibition of *creating Power*; to all these, are extended, the special Regards of *preserving Goodness*. From hence, let me learn to reply on the Providence, and to be ever sensible of the Presence, of the supreme Majesty.

To *rely* on his *Providence*.—For, not *one* Being; amidst that *inconceivable Number* and Variety, which swarm through the Regions of Creation; is overlooked, or neglected,

* There are living Creatures, abundantly smaller than the Mite. Mr. *Bradley*, in his Treatise on Gardening, mentions an *Insect*; which, after accurate Examination, he found to be a *Thousand* times less than the *least* visible Grain of Sand. At the same time declaring, that such an *Animalcule*, though quite imperceptible to the naked Eye, is a *bulky Being*; compared with others, almost infinitely more minute, discovered by Mr. *Lewenboeck*.---- If then we consider the *several Limbs*, which compose (if I may be allowed the Expression) such an organized Particle: The *different Springs*, which actuate such a Set of Limbs: The *Flow of Spirits*, inexpressibly more attenuated, which put those Springs in Motion: The various *Fluids*, that circulate: The different *Secretions*, that are performed: Together with the proportionable Minuteness of the *Solids*, before they arrive at their *full Growth*: Not to mention other *more astonishing* Modes of Diminution:—Sure, we shall see the utmost Reason to acknowledge, that the adored Maker is—MAXIMUS IN MINIMIS; greatly glorious even in his *smallest* Works.

by the great omnipotent Cause of all. However inconsiderable in it's Character, or diminutive in it's Size, it is still the Production of the universal Maker, and belongs to the Family of the Almighty Father.—What? Though enthroned Archangels, enjoy the *Smiles* of his *Countenance*; yet, the low Inhabitants of Earth, and most despicable Worms that creep the Ground, are not excluded from his kind *providential Cares*. Though the Manifestation of his Perfections, is vouchsafed to holy and intellectual Essences; his Ear is open, to the Cries of the young Raven; his Eye attentive, to the Wants, and to the Welfare, of the very meanest Births of Nature.—How much less then, are his *own People* disregarded? *Those*, for whom He has delivered his beloved Son to Death, and for whom he has prepared Habitations of eternal Joy. *They* disregarded! No: THEY are “kept as the Apple of “an Eye;” the very Hairs of their Head are all numbered; and the fondest Mother may *forget* the *Infant*, that is “dandled “upon her Knees,” and sucks at her Breast*;

* Isai. xlix. 15. *Can a Woman forget her sucking Child; that she should not have Compassion on the Son of her Womb? Yea, they may forget; yet will I not forget thee.* —How

260 CONTEMPLATIONS

much sooner than the Father of everlasting Compassions can *discontinue*, or *remit*, his watchful Tenderneſs to thoſe, whom He

delicate, and very expreſſive, are the Images, in this charming Scripture ! How full of *Beauty*, if beheld in a *critical*, how rich with *Conſolation*, if conſidered in a *believing*, View !—Can a *Woman* ; one of the ſofter Sex, whoſe Nature is moſt impreſſible, and whoſe Paſſions are remarkably tender—Can ſuch a one, not barely diſregard, but intirely *forget* ; not ſuſpend her Care for a while, but utterly eſaſe the very Memory of—*Her Child* ; her own Child, not another's ; a Child, that was formed in her *Womb*, and is a Part of herſelf ?—*Her Son* ; the more important, and therefore more deſirable Species ; to whom it peculiarly belongs, to preſerve the Name, and build up the Family—*Her only Son* ; for the Word is ſingular ; and refers to a Caſe, where the Offspring, not being numerous, but centred in a ſingle Birth, muſt be productive of the fondeſt Endearment—Can ſhe divest herſelf of all Concern for ſuch a Child ; not when he is grown up to Maturity, or gone abroad from her Houſe ; but, while he continues in an infantile State, and muſt owe his whole Safety to her kind Attendance ; while he lies in her Boſom, reſts on her Arm, and even *sucks* at her Breaſt ?—Eſpecially, if the poor Innocent be racked with Pain, or ſeized by ſome ſevere Affliction ; and ſo become an Object of *Compaſſion*, as well as of Love. Can ſhe hear it's piercing Cries ; can ſhe ſee it all reſtleſs, all helpleſs under it's Miſery ; and feel no Emotions of parental Pity ?—Or, if *one* ſuch Monſter of Inhumanity might be found ; yet, can *all* Mothers be ſo degenerate ? This, ſure, need never be feared. Much leſs need the *true Believer*, be apprehenſive of the *Failure* of my *Kindneſs*. An *universal* Extinction, of theſe *ſtrongeſt* Affections of Nature, is a more ſuppoſeable Caſe ; than that I ſhould ever be unmindful of my People, or regardless of their Interests.

condescends

condescends to call, not Servants only, but *Children*.

LET this teach me also a more lively *Sense* of the *Divine Presence*.—All the *rolling Worlds* above; all the *living Atoms* below; together with all the Beings that *intervene*, betwixt these wide Extremes; are *Vouchers* for an ever present Deity. “God has not left
 “Himself without Witnesses.” There are the Marks of his Footsteps in every Place, and the Touches of his Finger in every Creature. “*Thy Name is so nigh, O Thou all-
 “supporting, all-informing LORD; and that
 “do thy wondrous Works declare. Thy Good-
 “ness warms in the Morning Sun, and re-
 “freskes in the Evening Breeze. Thy Glory
 “shines in the Lamps of Midnight, and
 “smiles in the Blossoms of Spring. We see
 “a Trace of thy incomprehensible Gran-
 “deur, in the boundless Extent of Things;
 “and a Sketch of thy exquisite Skill, in
 “those almost evanescent Sparks of Life,
 “the Insect Race.”—O! how stupid is this Heart of mine, that, amidst such a Multitude of Remembrancers, thronging on every Side, I should forget Thee a single Moment! Grant me, Thou great I AM; Thou Source, and Support, of universal
 S 3 Existence;*

262 CONTEMPLATIONS

Existence ;—O ! grant me an enlightened Eye, to *discern* Thee in every Object ; and a devout Heart, to *adore* Thee on every Occasion. Instead of living without God in the World ; may I be ever with Him, and see all Things full of Him * !

. If the beautiful Spangles which a clear Night pours on the Beholder's Eye : if those other Fires, which beam in remoter Skies ; and are discoverable only by, that Revelation to the Sight, the Telescope : if all those *bright Millions*, are so many Fountains of Day ; enriched with native and independent Lustre ; illuminating Planets, and enlivening Systems, of their own † : O ! what

* ——— The glitt'ring Stars,
By the deep Ear of Meditation heard,
Still in their Midnight Watches sing of HIM.
He nods a Calm. The Tempest blows his Wrath.
The Thunder is his Voice ; and the red Flash
His speedy Sword of Justice. At his Touch
The Mountains flame. He shakes the solid Earth,
And rocks the Nations. Nor in these alone,
In *ev'ry common Instance* God is seen.

THOMSON'S *Spring*.

† Consult with *Reason*. Reason will reply,
Each *lucid Point*, which glows in yonder Sky,
Informs a *System* in the boundless Space,
And fills, with Glory, it's appointed Place :
With Beams unborrow'd, brightens other Skies ;
And *Worlds*, to Thee unknown, with Heat and Life
supplies.

The Universe.

amazing

amazing Pomp is disclosed, in the Midnight Scene! What *unknown Riches* are disseminated through all these numberless Provinces, of the great JEHOVAH's Empire!—Yet, immense and endless as they are, there's not the *meanest Slave*, but carries incomparably *greater Wealth* in his own Bosom. The *Soul*, that informs his Clay;—the Soul that teaches him to think, and enables him to choose; that qualifies him to relish rational Pleasure, and to breathe sublime Desire *;—the Soul, that is possessed of such noble Faculties; and, above all, is endued with the *dreadful*, the *glorious* Capacity, of being pained, or blessed, for ever—this Soul surpasses in Worth, whatever the Eye can see; whatever, of material, the Fancy can imagine. Before one such intellectual Being, all the most astonishing *Magnificence* of unintelligent Creation, becomes poor and *contemptible* †.

* In *this* respect, as vested with such Capacities, the Soul even of *fallen* Man, has an unquestionable Greatness and Dignity; is *majestic*, though in *Ruin*.

† I beg Leave to transcribe a pertinent Passage, from that celebrated Master of Reason, and universal Literature, Dr. *Bentley*; whom no one can be tempted to suspect, either tinctured with Enthusiasm, or warped to Bigotry.—“ If we consider, says he, the Dignity of an intelligent Being, and put that in the Scale against brute
“ and inanimate Matter, we may affirm, without over-

264 CONTEMPLATIONS

For this, Omnipotence itself has waked, and worked, through every Age. To *convince* this Soul, the fundamental Laws of Nature have been controuled; and the most amazing Miracles, have alarmed all the Ends of the Earth. To *instruct* this Soul, the Wisdom of Heaven has been transfused into the sacred Page; and Missionaries have been sent from the Great King, who resides in Light unapproachable. To *sanctify* this Soul, the Almighty Comforter takes the Wings of a Dove; and, with a sweet transforming Influence, broods on the human Heart. And O! to *redeem* this Soul from Guilt; to rescue it from Hell; the Heaven of Heavens was bowed, and God himself came down to dwell in Dust.

LET me pause, a Moment, upon this important Subject.—What are the Schemes, which engage the Attention of eminent Statesmen, and mighty Monarchs, compared with the *grand Interests* of an immortal Soul? The *Support of Commerce*, and the

“ valuing human Nature, that the Soul of one virtuous
 “ and religious Man is of greater Worth and Excellency,
 “ than the Sun, and his Planets, and all the Stars in the
 “ World.”

See his Sermons at *Boyle's Lect.* N° 8.

Success

Success of *Armies*, though extremely weighty Affairs; yet, if laid in the Balance against the Salvation of a Soul, are lighter than the downy Feather, poised against Talents of Gold. To save a *Navy* from *Shipwreck*, or a *Kingdom* from *Slavery*, are Deliverances of the most momentous Nature, that the Transactions of Mortality can admit. But O! how they shrink into an inconsiderable Trifle, if (their Aspect upon Immortality forgot) they are set in Competition with the *Delivery* of a *single* Soul, from the Anguish and Horrors of a *distressed* Eternity! *

SINCE, such is the Soul's Importance; what *Vigilance* can be *too much*; or rather what holy *Solicitude* can be *sufficient*; for the Overseers of the Saviour's Flock, and the Guardians of this unutterably noble Charge? — Since, such is the Importance of the Soul; wilt thou not, O Man, be watchful for the Preservation of thy own? Shall every *casual* Incident, awaken thy Concern; every *transitory* Toy, command thy Regard? And shall the Welfare of thy Soul, a Work of *conti-*

* Not all yon Luminaries quench'd at once
Were half so sad, as one benighted Mind,
Which gropes for Happiness, and meets Despair,
Night-Thoughts, N^o IX.

266 CONTEMPLATIONS

nual Occurrence ; a Work of *endless* Consequence ; sue, in vain, for thy serious Care ? —Thy Soul, thy Soul, is thy All. If this be *secured*, thou art greatly rich, and wilt be unspeakably happy. If this be *lost*, a whole World acquired, will leave thee in Poverty ; and all it's Delights enjoyed, will abandon thee to Misery.

I HAVE often been *charmed*, and *awed*, at the Sight of the nocturnal Heavens ; even before I knew how to consider them, in their proper Circumstances of Majesty and Beauty. *Something*, like *Magic*, has struck my Mind, on a transient and unthinking Survey of the æthereal Vault ; when tinged throughout with the purest Azure, and decorated with innumerable starry Lamps. I have felt, I know not what, powerful and aggrandizing Impulse ; that snatched me from the *low Intanglements* of Vanity, and prompted an ardent Sigh for *sublimier Objects*. Methought, I heard, even from the silent Spheres, a commanding Call, to spurn the abject Earth, and pant after unseen Delights.—Henceforward, I hope to imbibe more copiously, this *moral Emanation* of the Skies ; when, in some such Manner as the preceding, they are rationally seen, and duly weighed. The
Stars,

Stars, I trust, will *teach* as well as *shine*; and help to dispel, both Nature's Gloom, and my intellectual Darknefs. To Some, they discharge no higher a Service, than that of holding a *Flambeau* to their *Feet*, and softening the Horrors of their Night. To me, may they be Ministers of a superior Order; and act as *Counsellors* of *Wisdom*, and *Guides* to *Happiness*. Nor will they fail to execute this noble Office, if they gently and gradually light my Way, into the Knowledge of their adored Maker; and point out, with their silver Rays, my Path to his beatific Presence.

I GAZE, I ponder. I ponder, I gaze; and think ineffable Things.—I roll an Eye of Awe and Admiration. Again and again I repeat my ravished Views; and can never satiate my Sight, in this immense Theatre. I spring my Thoughts in Speculation, till even Fancy tires upon her Wing. I find Wonders, *ever new*; Wonders, more and *more amazing*.—Yet, after all my present Inquiries, what a mere *Nothing* do I *know*; by all my future Searches, how *little* shall I be able to *learn*; of those vastly distant Suns, and their circling Retinue of Worlds! Could I pry with *Newton's* piercing Sagacity, or
launch

268 CONTEMPLATIONS

launch into his most extensive Surveys : yet, even then, my Apprehensions would be little better, than those dim and scanty Images, which the *Mole*, just emerged from her Cavern, receives on her feeble Optic.—This, sure, should repress all immoderate Thirst, after an *Insight* into the *Secrets*, of the starry Structures ; and make me more careful, to *cultivate* my *Heart*. To fathom the Depths of the Divine Essence ; or to scan universal Nature, with a critical Exactness ; is an Attempt, that sets the *acuteſt Philoſopher*, very nearly on a Level with *the Idiot*. Since it is almost, if not altogether, as impracticable by the One, as by the Other.

BE it, then, my chief Study, not to pursue, what is absolutely unattainable ; but rather to seek, what is obvious to find ; easy to be acquired ; and of inestimable Advantage, when possessed. O ! let me seek *that Charity*, which edifieth * ; *that Faith*, which

* 1 *Cor.* viii. 1. I need not inform my Reader, that in this Text ; in that admirable Chapter 1 *Cor.* xiii. and in various other Passages of Scripture ; the Word *Charity*, is by no means to be confined, to the particular Act of *Alms-giving*, or external Beneficence. It is of a much more exalted and extensive Nature. It signifies that noble and divine Grace, which *warms* the Soul with a *supreme Love*, to God ; and *inlarges* it with a *disinterested* purifieth,

purifieth. Love, humble Love, and not *conceited Science*, keeps the Door of Heaven. Faith, a child-like Faith in JESUS; and not the *haughty self-sufficient Spirit*, which scorns to be ignorant of any Thing; presents a Key * to those Abodes of Bliss.—This present State, is the Scene destined to the *Exercise of Devotion*; the invisible World, is the Place appointed for the *Enjoyment of Knowledge* †. There, the Dawn of our infantile Minds, will be advanced to the Maturity of perfect Day; or rather, there our midnight Shades, will be brightened into all the Lustre of Noon. There, the Souls that come from the *School of Faith*, and bring with them the *Principles of Love*, will dwell in Light itself; will be obscured with no Darkness at all; will know, even as they are known.—Such an Acquaintance, therefore,

Affection, for Men. Which renders it the reigning Care of the Life, and chief Delight of the Heart, to promote the *Glory of the ONE*, and the *Happiness of the Other*.—*This, this*, is that Charity of which so many *excellent Things* are every-where spoken: Which can never be too highly extolled, or too earnestly coveted, since it is the *Image of God*, and the very *Spirit of Heaven*.

* By *Milton* beautifully stiled,
 ——— The golden Key,
 That opes the Palace of Eternity. MILT. *Comus*.

† 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

do

270 CONTEMPLATIONS

do I desire to form, and to carry on such a Correspondence, with the heavenly Bodies ; as may shed a benign Influence on the Seeds of Grace, implanted in my Breast. Let the exalted Tracts of the Firmament, sink my Soul into *deep Humiliation*. Let those eternal Fires, kindle in my Heart an *adoring Gratitude*, to their Almighty Sovereign. Let yonder ponderous and enormous Globes, which rest on his supporting Arm ; teach me an *unshaken Affiance*, in their incarnate Maker. And I shall be—if not wise as the Astronomical Adept, yet WISE UNTO SALVATION.

HAVING now walked, and worshiped in this *universal Temple*, that is *arched* with Skies ; *emblazed* with Stars ; and extended even to Immensity—Having cast an Eye, like the inraptured Patriarch* ; an Eye of *Reason* and *Devotion*, through the magnificent Scene : with the one, having discovered an *Infinitude* of *Worlds* ; and with the other, met the *Deity* in every View—Having beheld, as *Moses* in the flaming Bush, a *Glimpse* of JEHOVAH's Excellencies ! *reflected* from the Planets, and *streaming* from Myriads of ce-

* Gen. xv. 5.

lestial Luminaries—Having read *various Lessons*, in that stupendous *Book of Wisdom**, where unmeasurable Sheets of Azure compose the Page; and Orbs of Radiance write, in everlasting Characters, a *Comment* on our *Creed*—What remains, but that I close the *midnight Solemnity*, as our LORD concluded his grand Sacramental Institution, with a *Song of Praise*?—And behold a Hymn, suited to the sublime Occasion; indited by † Inspiration itself; transferred into our Language, by ‡ one of the happiest Efforts of human Ingenuity.

*The spacious Firmament on high,
With all the blue æthereal Sky,
And spangled Heav'ns, a shining Frame,
Their great Original proclaim :
Th' unweary'd Sun, from Day to Day,
Does his Creator's Pow'r display ;
And publishes, to ev'ry Land,
The Work of an Almighty Hand.*

*Soon as the Ev'ning Shades prevail,
The Moon takes up the wondrous Tale ;*

* ——— For Heaven
Is as *the Book of God* before thee set,
Wherein to read his wondrous Works.—MILT.

† Psal. xix.

‡ Addison, *Spectr.* Vol. VI. N° 465.

*And nightly, to the list'ning Earth,
 Repeats the Story of her Birth;
 While all the Stars, that round her burn,
 And all the Planets in their Turn,
 Confirm the Tidings as they roll,
 And spread the Truth from Pole to Pole.*

*What though, in solemn Silence, all
 Move round the dark terrestrial Ball?
 What though, nor real Voice nor Sound
 Amid their radiant Orbs be found?
 In Reason's Ear they all rejoice,
 And utter forth a glorious Voice,
 For ever singing, as they shine,
 The Hand, that made Us, is divine.*



A

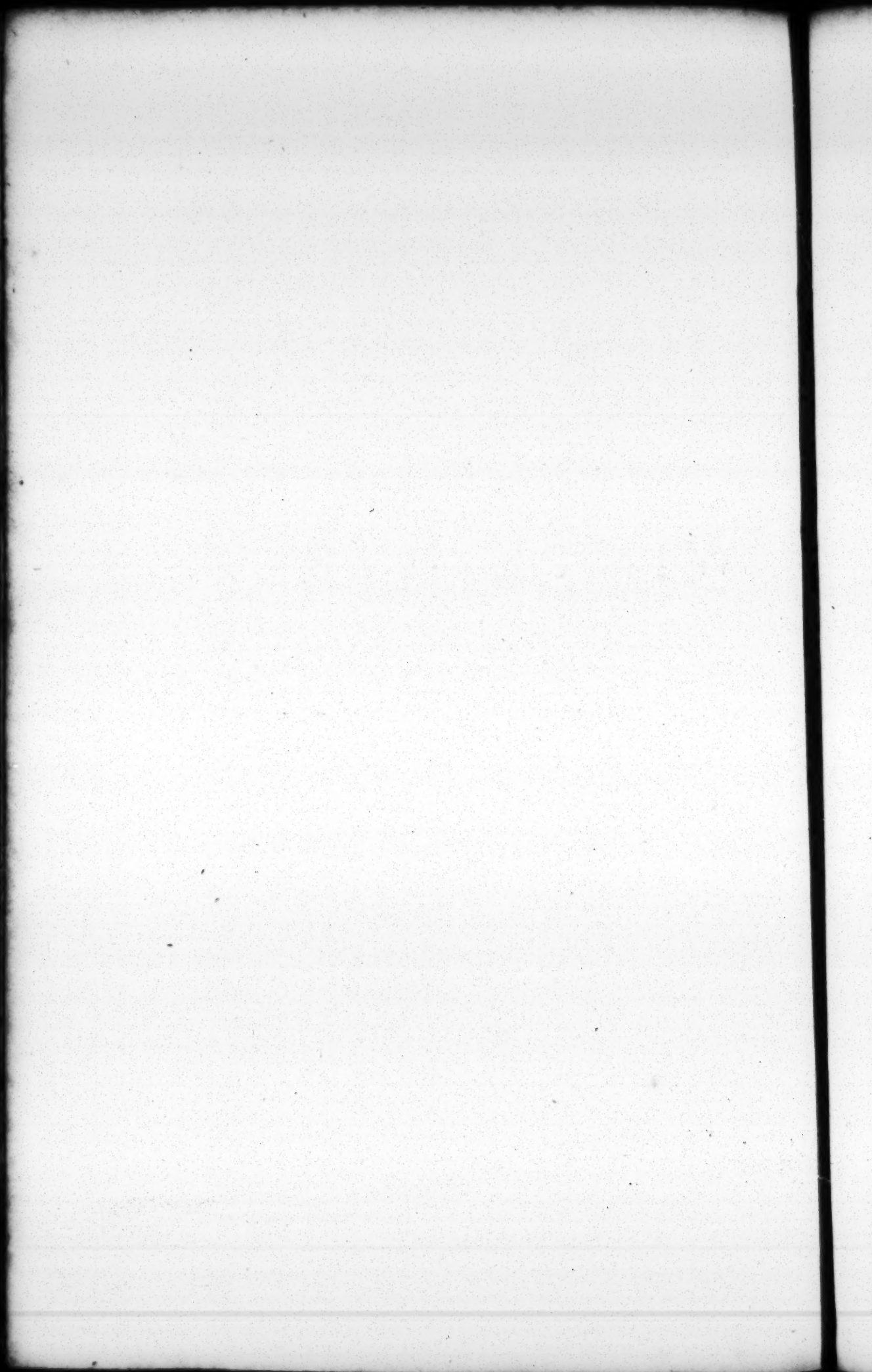
WINTER-PIECE.

*Storms and Tempests may calm the Soul—Snow
and Ice be taught to warm the Heart, and
praise the Creator.*

Anonym. Lett. to the Author, See p. 278.

VOL. II.

T





T H E

C O N T E N T S.

*I*Ntroduction—Shortness of the Winter's Day
—Incessant Rain, producing a Flood—
Tempest; it's Effects; at Land, by Sea—Pitchy
Darkness; riding in it—Thick Rime—Keen
Frost, and Serenity of Weather—Severe Cold,
and piercing Winds—Deep Snow—General
Thaw—Ever-Greens—Storm of Hail—Rain-
bow.



A

WINTER-PIECE.



IS true, in the delightful Seasons, HIS Tenderneſs, and HIS Love, are moſt eminently diſplayed. — In the *vernal* Months, all is Beauty to the Eye, and Muſic to the Ear. The Clouds drop Fatneſs ; the Air ſoftens into Balm ; and Flowers, in rich Abundance, ſpring where-ever we tread, bloom where-ever we look. — Amidſt the burning Heats of *Summer*, HE expands the Leaves, and thickens the Shades : He ſpreads the cooling Arbour, to receive Us ; and awakes the gentle Breeze, to fan Us : the Moſs ſwells into a Couch, for the Re-poſe of our Bodies ; while the Rivulet ſoftly rolls, and ſweetly murmurs, to ſooth our
T 3 Imagination.

Imagination.—In *Autumn*, HIS Bounty covers the Fields, with a Profusion of yellow Treasure; and bends the Boughs, with Loads of delicious Fruit. He furnishes his hospitable Board with present Plenty, and prepares a copious Magazine for future Wants—But, is it *only* in these smiling Periods of the Year, that God, the all-gracious God, is seen? Has *Winter* no Tokens of his Presence? Is not *Winter* eloquent of his Praise? Yes: “His Way is in the “Whirlwind.” Storms and Tempests fulfil his Word, and extol his Power. Even piercing Frosts, bear Witness to his Goodness; while they bid the shivering Nations, tremble at his Wrath.—Be *Winter* then, for a while, our Theme*. Perhaps, those *barren* Scenes, may be *fruitful* of intellectual Improvement. Perhaps, that rigorous Cold,

* A Sketch of this Nature, I must acknowledge, is quite different from the Subject of the Book; and, I cannot but declare, was as far distant from the Thoughts of the Author. But, the Desire of *several* Acquaintance, together with an Intimation of it's Usefulness, by a very *polite Letter* from an *unknown* Hand (which has *undesignedly* furnished me with the best Motto, I could recollect, prevailed with me to add a few descriptive Touches, and improving Hints, on what is so often experienced in these Northern Regions. I hope, the Attempt I have made to oblige these Gentlemen, will obtain the *Approbation*, or at least, the *Excuse*, of my other Readers.

which

which binds the Earth in icy Chains; may serve to enlarge our Hearts, and warm them with holy Love.

SEE! how the *Day* is *shortened*!—The Sun, detained in fairer Climes, or engaged in more agreeable Services, rises, like an unwilling Visitant, with tardy and reluctant Steps. He walks, with a shy Indifference, along the Edges of the Southern Sky; casting an oblique Glance, he just looks upon our dejected World; and scarcely scatters Light, through the thick Air. Dim is his Appearance, languid are his Gleams, while He continues. Or, if He chance to wear a brighter Aspect, and a cloudless Brow; yet, like the Young and Gay in the House of Mourning, He seems uneasy, till He is gone; is in Haste to depart.—And let Him depart. Why should we wish for his longer Stay; since He can shew Us nothing, but Spectacles of Woe? The flowery World lies dead, and the tuneful Tribes are struck dumb. The Trees, stript of their Verdure, and lashed by Storms, spread their naked Arms to the enraged and relentless Heavens. Fragrance no longer floats in the Air; but chilling Damps hover, or cutting Gales blow. Nature, divested of all her

beautiful Robes, sits, like a forlorn disconsolate Widow, in her Weeds. While Winds, in doleful Accents, howl; and Rains, in repeated Showers, weep.

WE regret not, therefore, the speedy Departure of the Day. When the Room is hung with *funeral Black*, and dismal Objects are all around; who would wish to have the *glimmering Taper* kept alive: which can only discover Scenes of Sorrow; only make the Horror visible?—And, since this mortal Life is little better than a continual Conflict with Sin, or an unremitted Struggle with Misery; is it not a *gracious* Ordination, which has reduced our Age to a *Span*? Fourscore Years of Trial, for the Virtuous, are sufficiently long; and more than such a Term, allowed to the Wicked, would render them beyond all Measure vile. Our Way to the Kingdom of Heaven, lies through Tribulations: Shall we then *accuse*, shall we not rather *bless*, the Providence, which has made the Passage short? Soon, soon we cross the Vale of Tears; and then arrive on the happy Hills, where Light for ever shines, where Joy for ever smiles.

SOMETIMES, the Day is rendered shorter still; is almost blotted out from the
Year.

Year *. The Vapours gather ; they thicken into an impenetrable Gloom ; and obscure the Face of the Sky. At length, the *Rains* descend ; the Sluices of the Firmament are opened ; and the low-hung Clouds pour their congregated Stores. Copious and un-intermitted, still they pour ; and still are un-exhausted. The Waters drop incessantly from the Eaves, and rush in rapid Streams from the Spouts. They roar along the channelled Pavements, and stand in foul Shallows amidst the Village-Streets. Now, if the in-attentive Eye, or negligent Hand, has left the Roof but scantily covered ; the insinuating Element finds it's Way into every Flaw, and, oozing through the Cieling, at once upbraids and chastises the careless Inhabitant. The Ploughman, soaked to the Skin, leaves his half-tilled Acre. The poor Poultry, dripping with Wet, croud into Shelter. The Tenants of the Bough fold up their Wings, afraid to launch into the streaming Air. The Beasts, joyless and dispirited, ruminate under their Sheds. The Roads swim, and the Brooks swell.—The *River*, amidst all this watry Ferment, long contained itself

* *Involvere Diem Nimbi, & Nox humida Cœlum*
Abstulit. —————

VIRG.

within

within it's appointed Bounds. But, swollen by innumerable Currents; and roused, at last, into uncontrollable Rage; bursts over it's Banks; shoots into the Plain; bears down all Opposition; spreads itself far and wide; and buries the Meadow under a brown, sluggish, soaking *Deluge*.

How fortunate for Man, that this Inundation comes, when there are no flowery Crops in the Valley, to be overwhelmed; no Fields standing thick with Corn, to be laid waste! At *such* a Juncture, it would have been *Ruin*, to the Husbandman and his Family: but, *thus* timed, it yields *Manure* for his Ground, and promises Him *Riches* in Reversion.—How often, and how long, has the Divine Majesty bore with the most injurious Affronts from Sinners! His Goodness triumphed over their Perverseness, and graciously refused to be exasperated. But, O presumptuous Creatures, multiply no longer your Provocations. Urge not, by repeated Iniquities, the Almighty Arm to strike; lest his Long-suffering cease, and his fierce Anger break forth; break forth, like a *Flood of Waters**, and sweep you away, into irrecoverable and everlasting Perdition.

* Hof. v. 10.

A WINTER-PIECE. 283

How mighty ! how majestic ! and Oh ! how mysterious are thy Works, Thou GOD of Heaven, and LORD of Nature ! When the Air is calm, where sleep the *stormy Winds* ? In what Chambers are they reposed, or in what Dungeons confined ! Till Thou art pleased to awaken their Rage, and throw open their Prison-Doors : Then, with irresistible Impetuosity they fly forth, scattering Dread, and menacing Destruction.

THE whole Atmosphere is hurled into the most tumultuous Confusion. The aerial Torrent bursts it's Way over Mountains, Seas, and Continents. All Things feel the dreadful Shock. All Things tremble before the furious Blast. The *Forest*, vexed and tore, groans under the Scourge : her sturdy Sons are strained to the very Root, and almost kiss the Soil, they were wont to shade. The stubborn Oak, that disdains to bend, is dashed headlong to the Ground ; and, with shattered Arms, with prostrate Trunk, blocks the Road.—While the flexile Reed, that springs up in the Marsh, yielding to the Gust (as the *meek* and pliant Temper, to Injuries ; or the *resigned* and patient Spirit, to Misfortunes) ; eludes the Force of
the

284 A WINTER-PIECE.

the Storm, and survives amidst the wide-spread Havock.

FOR a Moment, the turbulent and outrageous Sky, seems to be asswaged: but, it intermits it's Wrath, only to increase it's Strength. Soon, the sounding Squadrons of the Air return to the Attack, and renew their Ravages with redoubled Fury. The stately Dome rocks, amidst the wheeling Clouds. The impregnable Tower totters on it's Basis; and threatens to overwhelm, whom it was intended to protect. The ragged Rock is rent in Pieces*; and even the Hills, the perpetual Hills, on their deep Foundations, are scarcely secure.—Where, now, is the Place of Safety? When the *City* reels, and Houses become Heaps! Sleep affrighted flies. Diversion is turned into Horror. All is Uproar in the Element; all is Consternation among Mortals; and nothing, but one wide Scene of rueful Devastation, through the Land.—Yet, this is only an *inferior* Minister of divine Displeasure. The Executioner of *milder* Indignation. How then—O! *how will the lofty Looks of Man be humbled, and the Haughtiness of Men be bowed*

* I Kings xix. 11.

down;

A WINTER-PIECE. 285

down *; when the LORD GOD Omnipotent shall *meditate* Terror—when He shall set *all* his Terrors in Array—when He arises, to judge the Nations, and to *shake terribly* the Earth!

THE *Ocean* swells with tremendous Com-motions. The ponderous Waves are heaved from their capacious Bed, and almost lay bare the unfathomable Deep. Flung into the most rapid Agitation, they sweep over the Rocks; they lash the lofty Cliffs, and toss themselves into the Clouds. Navies are rent from their Anchors; and, with all their enormous Load, are whirled, swift as the Arrow, wild as the Winds, along the vast

* ——— Mortalia Corda
Per Gentes humilis stravit Pavor.——

One would almost imagine, that *Virgil* had read *Isaiah*, and borrowed his Ideas from Chap. ii. Ver. 11. The *humilis*, and *stravit*, of the one, so exactly correspond with the—*humbled—bowed down*—of the other. But, in one Circumstance, the Prophet is very much superior, to the Poet. The Prophet, by giving a striking *Contrast* to his Sentiments, represents them with incomparably greater Energy. He says not, *Men* in the gross, or the *human Heart* in general: but Men of the most *elated* Looks; Hearts big with the most *arrogant* Imaginations; even *Haughtiness* itself; shall *stoop* from their supercilious Heights, shall *grovel* in the lowest Dust of Abasement, and *shudder* with all the Extremes of an abject Pusillanimity.

Abyss.

Abyfs. Now, they climb the rolling Mountain; they plow the frightful Ridge; and seem to skim the Skies: anon, they plunge into the opening Gulph; they lose the Sight of Day; and are lost themselves to every Eye. How vain is the Pilot's Art! How impotent the Mariner's Strength! They reel to and fro, and stagger in the jarring Hold; or cling to the Cordage, while bursting Seas foam over the Deck. *Despair* is in every Face, and *Death* sits threatening on every Surge.—But why, O ye astonished Mariners, why should you abandon yourselves to Despair? Is the LORD's Hand *shortened*, because the Waves of the Sea rage horribly? Is his Ear *deafened*, by the roaring Thunders, and the bellowing Tempest? Cry, Cry, unto HIM, who “holdeth the “Winds in his Fist, and the Waters in “the Hollow of his Hand.” HE is all-gracious, to hear; and almighty, to save. If HE command, the Storm shall be hushed to Silence: the Billows shall subside into a Calm: the Lightnings shall lay their fiery Bolts aside: and, instead of sinking in a watry Grave, you shall find Yourselfes brought to the desired Haven.

SOMETIMES,

SOMETIMES, after a joyless Day, a more dismal *Night* succeeds.—The lazy, louring Vapours had wove so thick a Veil, as the meridian Sun could scarcely penetrate. What Gloom then must overwhelm the nocturnal Hours! The Moon withdraws her Shining. Not a single Star, is able to struggle through the deep Arrangement of Shades. All is *pitchy Darkness*, without one enlivening Ray. How solemn! How awful! 'Tis like the Return of Chaos, or the Shroud of Nature. I don't wonder, that it is the Parent of Terrors, and so apt to ingender Melancholy.—Lately, the *Tempest* marked it's rapid Way with *Mischief*; now, the *Night* dresses her silent Pavilion with *Horror*.

I HAVE *sometimes* left the beaming Tapers, withdrawn from the ruddy Fire, and plunged into the thickest of these footy Shades: not in the least regretting the Change, but rather exulting in it as a welcome Deliverance. The very Gloom was pleasing, was exhilarating, compared with the Conversation, I quitted. The Speech of my *Companions* (How does it grieve me, that I should *even once* have Occasion to call them by *that* Name!) was the Language of Darkness: was Horror to the Soul, and Torture to the Ear.

Ear*.—Alas! that I should have Cause to make the Reflection! May I never be under a *Necessity* of repeating it! Their Tongues were dipt in the Venom of Asps: “ their “ Throat was an open Sepulchre;” cruel to their Neighbour’s Character, as the Grave; insatiable in *slandrous* Assassinations, as the Grave in devouring her Prey.—Sometimes, their licentious and ungovernable Discourse, shot Arrows of *Profaneness* against Heaven itself; and, in proud Defiance, challenged the Resentment of Omnipotence.—Sometimes, as if it was the Glory of human Nature, to share and cherish the *grosslest* Appetites of the Brute; and the Mark of a Gentleman, to have served an Apprenticeship in a Brothel; the filthiest Jest of the Stews (if low *Obscenity* can be a Jest) were nauseously

* What has been said, I ask’d my Soul, what done?
How flow’d our Mirth? or whence the Source begun?
Perhaps, the Jest, that charm’d the sprightly Croud,
And made the jovial Table laugh so loud,
To some *false* Notion ow’d its poor Pretence,
To an ambiguous Word’s perverted Sense;
To a wild Sonnet, or a wanton Air,
Offence and Torture to the sober Ear.
Perhaps, alas! the pleasing Stream was brought
From this Man’s Error, from another’s Fault;
From Topics, which Good-nature would forget,
And *Prudence* mention with the last Regret.

PRIOR’S *Solomon*.

obtruded

obtruded on the Company, till all the *modest* Part of it was expell'd: while the other besotted Creatures laughed aloud, though the Leprosy of Uncleanneſs appeared on their Lips.—Are not theſe Perſons *Prisoners* of *Darkneſs*; though blazing Sconces, pour artificial Day through their Rooms? Are not their Souls immured in the moſt baleful Shades; though the Noon-tide Sun is brightened, by flaming on their gilded Chariots? They diſcern not that great and adorable Being, who fills the Univerſe with his infinite and glorious Preſence: who is *all Eye*, to obſerve their Actions; *all Ear*, to hear their Words. They know not the all-ſufficient Redeemer, nor the unſpeakable Bleſſedneſs of his heavenly Kingdom. They are groping for the Prize of Happineſs; but will certainly graſp the Thorn of Anxiety. They are wantonly ſporting on the Brink of that Precipice; from whence, in a Moment, they may fall headlong into *irretrievable* Ruin, and *endleſs* Deſpair.

THEY have forced me out, and are, perhaps, deriding me in my Abſence: are charging my Reverence for my Maker, and *real* Senſe of the *Excellency* of the RATIONAL Nature, to the Account of Humour and

Singularity ; to Narrowness of Thought,
 or Sourness of Temper.—But be it so.—
 I will indulge no Indignation against them ;
 and, if any thing like it *should* arise, I will
 convert it into Prayer.—“ Pity them, Oh
 “ Thou Father of Mercies !—Shew them
 “ the Madness of their Profaneness—Shew
 “ them the Baseness of their vile Ribaldry
 “ —Let them be dumb, in silent Shame
 “ and Confusion ; till they open their Lips,
 “ to adore thine *insulted* Majesty—to implore
 “ thy gracious Pardon—and humbly devote
 “ to Thee, those social Hours, which they
 “ are now abusing, to thy Dishonour—to
 “ their own Contamination—and (unless
 “ timely Repentance intervene) to their com-
 “ mon Infamy, and final Perdition.”

I RIDE home amidst the gloomy Void : all
 darkling and solitary, I can scarce discern my
 Horse's Head ; and only guess out my blind
 Road. *No Companion*, but Danger ; or, per-
 haps, “ Destruction ready at my Side*.”—
 But, why do I fancy myself *solitary* ? Is not
 the Father of Lights ; the God of my Life ;
 the great and everlasting Friend ; always at
 my Right Hand ? Because the Day is exclud-
 ed, is his Omnipresence vacated ? Though

* Job xviii. 12.

A WINTER-PIECE. 291

I have no earthly Acquaintance near, to assist in case of a Misfortune ; or to beguile the Time, and divert uneasy Suspicions, by entertaining Conferences : May I not lay my Help upon the Almighty, and converse with GOD by humble Supplication ? For this Exercise, no Place is improper ; no Hour unseasonable ; and no Posture incommodious. This is *Society*, the best of Society, even in Solitude. This is a Fund of Delights, easily portable, and quite inexhaustible. A *Treasure* this, of unknown Value ; liable to no Hazard, from Wrong or Robbery ; but perfectly secure, to the lonely Wanderer, in the most darksome Paths.

AND why should I distress myself with *Apprehensions* of *Peril* ? This Access to GOD, is not only an indefeasible Privilege, but a kind of *ambulatory Garison*. Those, who make known their Requests unto GOD, and rely upon his protecting Care ; He gives *his Angels* Charge over their Welfare. His Angels are commissioned, to escort them in their Travelling ; and to hold up their Goings, that they dash not their Foot against a Stone*. Nay, *He himself* condescends to be their Guardian, and “ keeps all their

* Psal. xci. 11, 12.

“Bones, so that not one of them is broken.” They are, according to the Certificate of Revelation, “in League with the Stones of the Field*.” Though they fall headlong on the Flints; even the Flints, fitted to fracture the Skull, shall receive them as into the Arms of Friendship; and not offer to hurt, whom the LORD is pleased to preserve.

MAY I then enjoy the Presence of this gracious God, and Darkness and Light shall be both alike. Let HIM whisper Peace to my Conscience; and this dread Silence shall be more charming than the Voice of Eloquence, or the Strains of Music. Let HIM reveal his ravishing Perfections in my Soul; and I shall not want the saffron Beauties of the Morn, the golden Glories of Noon, or the impurpled Evening Sky. I shall sigh only for those most desirable and distinguished Realms; where, the Light of HIS Countenance, *perpetually* shines, and consequently —“there is † no Night there.”

How surprising are the Alterations of Nature! I left her, the preceding Evening, plain and unadorned. But, now, a *thick Rime* has shed its hoary Honours over all.

* Job v. 23.

† Rev. xxi. 25.

It has shagged the Fleeces of the Sheep, and crisped the Traveller's Locks. The Hedges are richly fringed, and all the Ground profusely powdered. The downward Branches are tasseled with Silver, and the upright are feathered with the plummy Wave.

BUT, the *Fine*, are not always the *Valuable*. The Air, amidst all these gaudy Decorations, is charged with chilling and *unwholesome* Damps. The hazy Influence spreads wide; sits deep; hangs heavy and oppressive on the Springs of Life. A listless Languor clogs the animal Functions; and the purple Stream glides but faintly through it's Channels. In vain, the Ruler of the Day exerts his beaming Powers: In vain, He attempts to disperse this Infurrection of Vapours. The sullen, malignant Cloud refuses to depart. It envelops the World, and *intercepts* the *Prospect*. I look abroad for the neighbouring Village; I send my Eye in quest of the rising Turret; but am scarce able to discern the very next House. Where are the blue Arches of Heaven; where is the radiant Countenance of the Sun; where the boundless Scenes of Creation? Lost, lost are their Beauties; quenched their Glories. The thronged Theatre of the Universe, seems an empty

Void ; and all it's elegant Pictures, an undistinguished Blank.—Thus would it have been with our intellectual Views, if the *Gospel* had not come in to our Relief. We should have known neither our true Good, nor real Evil. We had been a Riddle to ourselves ; the present State all Confusion, and the future impenetrable Darkneſs. But, the Sun of Righteouſneſs, ariſing with potent and triumphant Beams, has diſſipated the interpoſing Cloud ; and opened a Proſpect, more beautiful, than the Bloſſoms of Spring ; more chearing, than the Treasures of Autumn ; more enlarged, than the Extent of the viſible Syſtem. Which, having led the Eye of the Mind, thro' Fields of Grace, over Rivers of Righteouſneſs, and Hills crowned with Knowledge ; terminates, at length, in the Heavens ; ſweetly loſing itſelf, in Regions of infinite Blifs, and endless Glory.

As I walk along the Fog, it ſeems, at ſome little Diſtance, to be almoſt ſolid Gloom ; ſuch as would ſhut out every Glimpſe of Light, and totally imprifon me in Obſcurity. But, when I approach, and enter it ; I find myſelf agreeably miſtaken, and the Miſt much *thinner*, than it *appeared*.—Such is the Caſe, with regard to the *Sufferings* of the
 preſent

present Life; they are not, when experienced, so dreadful, as a timorous Imagination furnished. Such also is the Case, with reference to the *Gratifications* of *Sense*; they prove not, when enjoyed, so substantial, as a sanguine Expectation represented. In both Instances, we are graciously disappointed: the Edge of the Calamity is blunted, that it may not wound us with incurable Anguish: the exquisite Relish of the Prosperity is pallied, that it may not captivate our Affections, and enslave them to inferior Delights.

SOMETIMES, the Face of Things wears a more pleasing Form; the very Reverse of the foregoing. The sober Evening advances, to close the short-lived Day. The Firmament, clear and unfullied, puts on it's brightest Blue. The Stars, in thronging Multitudes, and with a peculiar Brilliancy, glitter through the fair Expanse. While the *Frost* pours it's subtle and penetrating Influence, all around. Sharp and intensely keen, all the long Night, the rigid Æther continues it's Operations. When, late and slow, the Morning opens her pale Eye; in what a curious and amusing Disguise, is Nature dressed! The Icicles, jagged and uneven, are pendant on the Houses. A whitish

296 A WINTER-PIECE.

Film incrusts the Windows, where mimic Landscapes rise, and fancied Figures swell. The fruitful Fields are hardened to Iron; the moistened Meadows are congealed to Marble; and both resound (an Effect unknown before) with the Peasant's hasty Tread. The Stream is arrested in it's Career, and it's ever-flowing Surface chained to the Banks. The fluid Paths become a solid Road; where the finny Shoals were wont to rove, the sportive Youth slide, or the rattling Chariots roll *. And (what would seem, to an Inhabitant of the Southern World, as unaccountable as the deepest Mysteries of Religion) that very same Breath of Heaven, which *cements* the Lakes into a crystal Pavement; *cleaves* the Oaks, as it were with invisible Wedges; "*breaks* in Pieces the Northern Iron, and "*the Steel*;" even while it *builds* a Bridge of Icy Rock, over the Seas †.

* *Concreſcunt ſubito currenti in flumine cruſtæ;
Undaque jam tergo ferratos ſuſtinet orbes,
Puppibus illa prius patulis, nunc hoſpita plauſtris.
Æraque diſſiliunt vulgo.*

VIRG.

† Job xxxviii. 30. *The Waters are hid, locked up from the Cattle's Lips, ſecured from the Fiſher's Nets, and concealed from the human Eye, as Wells are with a ponderous and impenetrable Stone. And not only Lakes and Rivers, but the Surface of the great Deep, with it's reſſleſs and uncontrollable Surges, is taken Captive* יתלכר *by the Froſt, and bound in ſhining Fetters.*

THE

THE Air is all Serenity. Refined by the nitrous Particles, it affords the most distinct Views, and extensive Prospects. The Seeds of *Infection*, are killed; and the *Pestilence* destroyed, even in Embryo. So, the Cold of *Affliction* tends to mortify our Corruptions, and subdue our vitious Habits.—The crowding Atmosphere constricts our Bodies, and braces our Nerves. The Spirits are buoyant, and sally briskly on the Execution of their Office. Had we been under such unclouded Skies, and so bright a Sun, in the Summer Months; we should have been melted with Heat, and softened into Supineness: been ready to stretch our Limbs under the spreading Beach, and lie at Ease by the murmuring Brook. But, now, none loiters in his Path; none is seen with folded Arms. All is in Motion; all is Activity. Choice, prompted by the Weather, supplies the Spur of Necessity. Thus, the *rugged School of Misfortune*, often trains up the Mind, to a lively Exertion of its Faculties; the *keen Climate of Adversity*, often inspirits us with a manly Resolution: when a soft and downy Affluence, perhaps, would have relaxed all the generous Spring of the Soul, and have left it enervated with Pleasure, or dissolved in Indolence.

“ COLD

298 A WINTER-PIECE.

“ *COLD* cometh out of the North.”
 The Winds, having swept those Desarts of
 Snow, arm themselves with Millions of fro-
 zen Particles, and make a fierce Descent
 upon our Isle. Under black and scowling
 Clouds, they drive, dreadfully whizzing,
 through the darkened Air. They growl
 around our Houses; assault our Doors;
 and, eager for Entrance, fasten on our
 Windows. Walls can scarce restrain them;
 Bars are unable to exclude them; through
 every Cranny they force their Way. Ice is
 on their Wings; they scatter Agues, through
 the Land; and Winter, all Winter, rages
 as they go. Their Breath is as a searing *
 Iron to the little Verdure, left in the Plains.
 Vastly more pernicious to the tender Plants
 than the sharpest Knife; they not only kill
 their Branches, but wound the very Root.
 Let not the Corn venture far, from the
 Entrenchment of the Furrow; let not the
 fruit-bearing Blossoms dare to come abroad,

* This, I suppose, is the Meaning of that figurative
 Expression, used by the Prophet *Habakkuk*; who, speak-
 ing of the *Chaldeans* invading *Judæa*, says—*Their Faces,*
 or the Incursions they make, *shall sup up*, shall swallow
 greedily, shall devour utterly, the Inhabitants of the
 Country, and their valuable Effects; *as the* keen, cor-
 roding Blasts of the *East-Wind*, destroy every green Thing
 in the Field. *Hab. i. 9.*

from

from their Lodgment in the Bark ; lest these savage, murderous Blasts, destroy the Hope of the advancing Year.

OH, 'tis severely cold ! Who is so hardy, as not to shrink at this *excessively pinching* Weather ? Every Face is pale. Even the blooming Cheeks contract a gelid Hue ; and the Teeth hardly forbear chattering.—Ye that sit easy and joyous, in your commodious Apartments, solacing yourselves in the diffusive Warmth of your Fire ; be mindful of your Brethren, in the cheerless Tenement of Poverty. *Their* shattered Panes are open to the piercing Winds ; a tattered Garment, scarcely covers their shivering Flesh ; while a few faint and dying Embers on the squalid Hearth, rather mock their Wishes, than warm their Limbs.—While the generous Juices of *Oporto*, sparkle in your Glasses ; or the Streams, beautifully tinged, and deliciously flavoured, by the *Chinese* Leaf, smok in the elegant Porcelain : O remember, that many of your Fellow-Creatures, amidst all the Rigour of these inclement Skies, are emaciated with Sickness ; benumbed with Age ; and pining with Hunger. Let “ their Loins bless you,” for comfortable Cloathing ! Supply them with
Food,

Food, with Fewel; and baffle the raging Year. So, may you never know any of their Distresses, but only by the Hearing of the Ear; the Seeing of the Eye; or the Feeling of a tender Commiseration!—Methinks, the bitter blustering Winds plead for the poor Indigents: may they breathe Pity into *your* Breasts; while they blow Hardships into *their* Huts!—Observe those blue Flames, and ruddy Coals, in your Chimney: quickened by the Cold, they look more lively, and glow more strongly. Silent, but seasonable Admonition to the gay Circle, that chat and smile around them! *Thus*, may your Hearts, at such a Juncture of Need, kindle into a peculiar Benevolence! Detain not your superfluous Piles of Wood. Let them hasten to the Relief of the starving Family. Bid them expire in many a willing Blaze, to mitigate the Severity of the Season, and chear the bleak Abodes of Want. So shall they ascend, mingled with Thanksgivings to God, and ardent Prayers for your Welfare—ascend, more grateful to Heaven, than curling Columns of the most costly Incense.

Now the Winds cease. Having brought their Load, they are dismissed from Service.
They

They have wafted an immense Cargo of Clouds, which empty themselves in *Snow*. At first, a few scattered Shreds come wandering down the saddened Sky. This slight Skirmish is succeeded by a general Onset. The Flakes, large, and numerous, and thick-wavering, descend in a continual Flow. All Night, the fleecy Showers, in softest Silence, fall. In the Morning, when we awake, what a surprising Change appears!---Is this the same World?---Here is no Diversity of Colour! I can hardly distinguish the Trees, from the Hills on which they grow. Where is the Difference between the Grounds, destined to the Plough; and those, reserved for Pasturage? All Things lie blended in bright Confusion. So bright, that it heightens the Splendor of Day, and even dazzles the Organs of Sight. The Lawn is not so fair, as this snowy Mantle, which invests the Fields; and even the Lily, was the Lily to appear, would look tarnish'd in it's Presence. I can think of but *one* Thing, which *excels*, or equals, this glittering Robe of Winter. Is any Person desirous to know what I mean? He may find it described, in that admirable Hymn *, composed by the Royal Penitent. Is any desirous to be possessed of so valuable

* Psal. li. 7. See Page 157, 158.

a Rarity? He will find it offered to his Acceptance, in every Page of the Gospel.— See! (for the Eye cannot satisfy itself, without viewing again and again the curious, the delicate Scene) See! how the Hedges are habited, like spotless Vestals! The Houses are roofed, with Uniformity and Lustre. The Meadows are covered, with a Carpet of the finest Ermine†. The Groves bow, beneath the lovely Burden: and all, all below, is one wide, immense, shining Waste of White.

AMAZING are the Works of the great Creator, and prodigiously *various*. How pliant and ductile is Nature, under his forming Hand! At his Command, the self-same Substance assumes the most different Shapes; and is transformed into an endless Multiplicity of Figures. If HE ordains, the Water is *moulded* into Hail, and discharged upon the Earth like a Volley of Shot; or, it is *consolidated* into Ice, and defends the Rivers, “as it were with a Breast-plate.” At the bare Intimation of his Will, the very same

† This Animal is Milk-white. As for those *black Spots*, which We generally see, in Linings of Ermine, they are added by the Furrier. In order to diversify the Appearance, or heighten the Beauty, of the native Colour.

Element is scattered in Hoar-Frost, like a Sprinkling of the most *attenuated* Ashes ; or, is spread over the Surface of the Ground, in these swelling Couches of deep and *flaky* Down.

THE SNOW, however it may carry the Appearance of Cold, affords a *warm* Garment for the Corn ; screens it from nipping Frosts, and cherishes it's infant Growth. It will abide for awhile, to exert a protecting Care, and exercise a fostering Influence. Then, touched by the Sun, or thawed by a softening Gale ; the furry Vesture, melts into genial Moisture ; sinks deep into the Soil, and saturates it's Pores with the dissolving Nitre : replenishing the Glebe with that vegetative Life, which will open into the Bloom of Spring, and ripen into the Fruits of Autumn.—Beautiful Emblem this, and comfortable Representation, of the *Efficacy* of the Divine *Word* : both in the successful, and advantageous Issue, of it's Operation ! “ As the Rain cometh down,
 “ and the Snow from Heaven, and return-
 “ eth not thither, but watereth the Earth,
 “ and maketh it bring forth and bud, that
 “ it may give Seed to the Sower, and Bread
 “ to the Eater : So shall my Word be, that
 “ goeth forth out of my Mouth : it shall
 “ not

“ not return unto me void, but shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the Thing whereunto I sent it*.”

NATURE, at length, puts off her lucid Veil. She drops it, in a trickling *Thaw*. The loosened Snow, rolls in Sheets from the Houses. Various Openings spot the Hills ; which, even while we look, become larger, and more numerous. The Trees rid themselves, by Degrees, of the hoary Incumbrance. Shook from the springing Boughs, Part falls heavy to the Ground, Part flies abroad in shining Atoms. Our Fields and Gardens, lately buried beneath the drifted Heaps, rise plain and distinct to View.—And since we see Nature once again, has she no verdant Traces, no beautiful Features, left ? They are, like real Friends, very rare ; and therefore the more particularly to be regarded, the more highly to be valued.—Here and there, the *Holly* hangs out her glowing Berries ; the *Laurustinus* spreads her graceful Tufts ; and both, under a Covert of unfading Foliage—The plain, but hardy *Ivy* cloathes the decrepit,

* Isa. lv. 10, 11.

crazy Wall; nor shrinks from the friendly Office, though the Skies frown, and the Storm roars.—The *Laurel*, firm, erect, and bold, expands it's Leaf of vivid Green. In spite of all the united, the repeated Attacks of Wind and Rain, and Frost, it preserves an undismayed lively Look; and maintains it's Post, while withering Millions fall around. Worthy, by vanquishing the rugged Force of Winter, worthy to adorn the triumphant Conqueror's Brow.—Nor must I forget the *Bay-tree*; which scorns to be a mean Pensioner, on a few sunny Gleams; or, with a servile Obsequiousness, to vary it's Appearance, in Conformity to the changing Seasons. By such Indications of sterling Worth, and staunch Resolution, reading a Lecture, to the Poet's Genius; while it weaves the Chaplet, for his Temples.—*These*, and a few other Plants, clad in native Verdure, retain their comely Aspect, in the bleakest Climes, and coldest Months.

SUCH, and so durable, are the Accomplishments of a *refined* Understanding, and an *amiable* Temper. The tawdry Ornaments of Dress, which catch the unthinking Vulgar, soon become insipid and despicable. The rubied Lip, and the flushing Cheek,

fade. Even the sparkling Wit *, as well as the sparkling Eye, please but for a Moment. But the virtuous Mind has Charms, which survive the Decay of every inferior Embellishment; Charms, which add to the Fragrancy of the Flower, the *Permanency* of the *Ever-green*.

* “ How little does God esteem the Things that Men count great; the Endowments of *Wit* and Eloquence, that *Men* admire in some! Alas! how poor are they to Him! He respecteth not any who are wise in Heart: they are nothing, and less than nothing, in his Eyes. Even *wise* Men admire, how little it is that Men know; how small a Matter lies under the Sound of these popular Wonders, a learned Man, a great Scholar, a great Statesman. How much more doth the all-wise God meanly account of These! He often discovers, even to the World, their Meanness. He *befools* them. So Valour, or Birth, or worldly Greatness, these He gives, and gives as Things He makes no great Reckoning of, to such as shall never see his Face; and calls to the Inheritance of Glory poor despised Creatures, that are looked on as the *Off-scourings*, and *Refuse* of the World.”

—*THUS* says an excellent Author; who writes with the most amiable Spirit of Benevolence; with the most unaffected Air of Humility; and, like the sacred Originals, from which he copies, with a majestic Simplicity of Style.—Whose *select Works* I may venture to recommend, not only as a Treasure, but as a MINE, of genuine, sterling, evangelical Piety.—See Page 520. of Archbishop LEIGHTON's *select Works*, the *Edinburgh* Edition, Octavo: Which it is necessary to specify, because the *London* Edition does not contain that Part of his Writings, which has supplied me with the preceding *Quotation*.

SUCH,

A WINTER-PIECE. 307

SUCH, likewise, is the *Happiness* of the *sincerely Religious*; like a Tree, says the inspired Moralist, "whose Leaf shall not fall." He borrows not his Peace from external Circumstances; but has a Fund within, and is "satisfied from himself*." Even though impoverished by Misfortunes, He is rich in the *Possession* of *Grace*, and richer in the *Hope* of *Glory*. His Joys are infinitely superior to, as well as nobly independent on, the transitory Glow of sensual Delight, or the capricious Favours of, what the World calls, Fortune.

IF the *Snow* composes the light-armed Troops of the Sky; methinks, the *Hail* constitutes it's heavy Artillery. When driven by a vehement Wind, with what dreadful Impetuosity, does that stony Shower fall! How it rebounds from the frozen Ground, and rattles on the resounding Dome! It attenuates the Rivers into Smoke, or scourges them into Foam. It crushes the infant Flowers; cuts in Pieces the Gardener's early Plants; and batters the feeble Fortification of his Glasses into Shivers. It darts into the Traveller's Face: He turns,

* Prov. xiv. 14.

308 A WINTER-PIECE.

with Haste, from the Stroke; or feels, on his Cheek, for the gushing Blood. If he would retreat into the House, it follows him even thither; and, like a determined Enemy, that pushes the Pursuit, dashes through the crackling Panes.—But, the fierce Attack is quickly over. The Clouds have soon spent their Shafts; soon unstrung their Bow. How happy for the Inhabitants of the Earth, that what is so dreadfully *furious*, should be so remarkably *short*! What else could endure the Shock, or escape Destruction?

BUT, behold a *Bow*, of no hostile Intention: a Bow, painted in variegated Colours, on the disburdened Cloud. How vast is the Extent, how delicate the Texture, of that *showery Arch*! It compasseth the Heavens, with a glorious Circle; and makes Us forget, the Horrors of the Storm. Elegant it's Form, and rich it's Tinctures; but more delightful it's sacred Significancy. While the Violet and the Rose, blush in it's beautiful Aspect; the Olive-branch smiles in it's gracious Import. It writes, in radiant Dyes, what the Angels sung in harmonious Strains; “Peace on Earth, and Good-will towards Men.” It is the Stamp of *Insurance*, for the
the

A WINTER-PIECE. 309

the continued Welfare of this present World ; and a comfortable *Token*, of a better State, and happier Kingdom :—a Kingdom, where the *Rainbow* is represented, as surrounding the Throne * ; to intimate, that *there* Storms shall beat, and Winter pierce no more ; but one unbounded *Spring* for ever, ever bloom.

* Rev. iv. 3.



[The Author having received, from an unknown Friend, the following INDEX; takes this Opportunity, publicly to thank him, for his obliging Assistance. As such an Appendage cannot but be acceptable to the Reader, and (in this Situation, we hope,) no Infringement to the Writer's Promise, it is therefore annexed to this larger Edition.]

AN ALPHABETICAL
I N D E X
T O T H E

PRINCIPAL THINGS considered in the
several Parts of this Book.

A.

A Bernethy's Sermons, a Quotation from them, i. 183. ii. 131.

Actions, the best performed by Men imperfect and polluted, i. 165.

Addison. See *Spectator*.

Advantages and Inconveniences often linked together, ii. 125.

Afflictions have their Use, ii. 297. See *Sickness*.

Aged Sinners should not despair, but it is dangerous to defer the Concerns of the Soul till the last Stage of Life, i. 53. Piety is the best Support of the Aged and Infirm, 57. See *Piety*.

Air, how wonderfully preserved in its Purity, ii. 34.

Angels adore the Redeemer, i. 263. Are Spectators of us in our most secret Retirements, ii. 15. Not able to redeem fallen Man, 151.

Animals, some exceeding small, ii. 177. Yet these discover the Creator to be great and glorious, 258.

Apparel, however rich and gay, is a mean Thing for rational Beings to value themselves upon, i. 170. See *Dress* and *Endowments* of the Mind.

Apparitions, their real Existence and occasional Appearance, ii. 59. Confirmed from a Passage in the Book of *Job*, *ibid*.

X 4

Ap-

I N D E X.

Appearances of Evil should be avoided, i. 230.

Astrology (judicial) the Folly of it, 129.

Atonement for Sin, complete and perfect, i. 165. ii. 150. Is the great Support of the Gracious, 153. Gives no Encouragement to Sin, 156. See *Blood*, *Jesus Christ*, and *Sufferings* of *Jesus*.

Attraction, what, ii. 248, 254. The powerful and extensive Influence of it, 251.

Aurora Borealis, vulgar Apprehensions respecting that Phænomenon, ii. 84.

B.

Beauty, human, its Frailty, i. 80. That of the Mind most valuable, 84.

Bee, the Ingenuity and Industry of that active Insect, i. 249, 284.

Bentley (Dr.) his Sermons at *Boyle's* Lectures quoted, ii. 263.

Bible, the most valuable Book. i. 161. See *Gospel*.

Blood of *Christ*, its Efficacy to atone for and take away Sin, i. 295. ii. 153. See *Atonement*, *Jesus Christ*, and *Sufferings* of *Jesus*.

Bounty of God boundless, and how, ii. 192. Gives great Encouragement to craving Sinners, 193. See *God*.

Bradley (Mr.) a Remark of his, ii. 258.

Brook that *Jesus* drank in the way, what, i. 140.

Burying in Churches, considered and defended, i. 58.

C.

Casimir, his Address to the Rose, i. 199.

Casualties (as called) how we are to conceive of them, i. 28.

Cattle (horned) a contagious Distemper among them taken Notice of, ii. 83.

Celsus, his Remark on the Conduct of *Christ* refuted, i. 271.

Changeableness of present things. See *Instability*.

Charity is sometimes extensively understood, ii. 268.

Children should be carefully instructed betimes in their Duty, i. 19. Are dear to their Parents, 20. See *Education*.

Christianity the great Ornament of human Life, recommended and quoted, i. 167.

Chrysostom, a Passage of his quoted, i. 157.

Church (Place of divine Worship) described, i. 2. The Dead interred therein renders it more awful, 58.

Clarendon (Lord) his History quoted, i. 69.

Clouds, their Beauty and Usefulness in the Hand of God, i. 211.

Cohesion. See *Attraction*.

Cold, its Usefulness to the outward Frame, ii. 297. Its Severity claims a compassionate Regard to the Poor, 299.

Comets

I N D E X.

Comets created by *Christ*, i. 265. That which appear'd in 1742 noted, ii. 80. A Remark of Sir *Isaac Newton's* on that in 1680, 81. Are no certain Fore-runners of approaching Judgments, *ibid.*

Compulsion (in Religion) what Kind of it is justifiable, i. 186.

Condescension of God, wonderful, i. 7. This should engage our highest Regard to him, 8.

Conflagration of the visible World, an awful Event, ii. 86.

Contemplations on the Tombs, i. 1. On the Flower-Garden, 121. On the Creation, 259. On the Night, ii. 1. On the Starry Heavens, 125. On Winter, its Phænomena and Attendants, 277. See *Meditations*.

Conversation of the Wicked is grieving to the Godly, ii. 287.

Conversion to God, its Rise and Progress represented, ii. 233.

Country, a Prospect of it, pleasant and improveable various Ways, i. 145.

Cowley, a Quotation from him, i. 75.

Creation, a Descant upon it, i. 259. Is ascribed to *Jesus*, and how, 154. (See *Jesus*.) Is boundless with respect to us, 140. See *Distance*.

Creature Enjoyments derive all their Value and Usefulness from *Christ*, i. 158.

Creatures around us usefully considered in different Lights, i. 122, 124.

Crowd, to withdraw from it greatly useful, i. 71. See *Solitude*.

D.

Darkness of the Night, ii. 35. Some ill Uses which many make of it, 37. It conceals the Beauties of the lower Creation, 41, 125.

Death often steps between Courtship and Marriage, i. 23. Is sometimes sudden, 26. (See *sudden Death*.) Beauty or Virtue no Security from it, 35. Is disarmed by Christianity, 37. Death and the Grave productive of great Changes in the Body, 80. Is introduced by Sin, 86. We should bring the Thoughts of it home to ourselves, 87. Faith in *Christ* the sure and sweet Support under the Views of it, 61, 92. Many Monitors of its Approach, ii. 66. See *wicked Men*.

Death of Christ. See *Jesus Christ*.

Deity of Jesus, i. 64. ii. 147, 182.

Deity (a Poem so called) quoted, ii. 257.

Derham (Dr.) Quotations from his Works, ii. 81, 132, 138, 140.

Devotion, Morning and Evening, recommended and enforced, ii. 107.

Dew,

I N D E X.

- Dew*, its Brilliancy and Usefulness, &c. i. 136.
- Dew of Christ's Youth* or Birth, what, i. 138.
- Differences* among Protestant Christians, comparatively small, i. 183.
- Distance* of the heavenly Bodies from us, amazingly great, ii. 139, 237, 256.
- Dodridge* (Dr.) commended as a Writer, and his *Family Expositor* quoted, i. 158, 226.
- Dreams* many times remarkable, ii. 47. Satan hath sometimes (at least) a Hand in them, 48. Safety herein is of God, 47. Waking Dreams dangerous, 50.
- Dress*, Pride in it, the Folly hereof, i. 169.
- Duties* of Life should be diligently performed, i. 88. See *Time*.
- Dyer* (Mr.) his Ruin of *Rome* quoted, i. 242.
- E.
20. The Advantages of Education many and manifest, 214. The Lord should be sought of Parents in every Attempt of this Kind, 217.
- Effects* many from a single Cause in the Hand of God, i. 182. ii. 253.
- Eliphaz*, his Vision (*Job* iv.) illustrated, ii. 59
- Endowments* of the Mind, true Blessings, i. 172. ii. 306.
- Ermine* (the Creature so called) a Remark thereon, ii. 302.
- Eternity*, an amazing, mysterious, awful, and delightful Subject, i. 99. The Folly of neglecting the Concerns of it, 49. This Neglect dreadful at Death, 50. See *old Age*, and *sudden Death*.
- Evening* (of the Day) described, ii. 6. Its Coolness useful various Ways, 12.
- Expiation* of Sin. See *Atonement*, *Blood*, *Jesus Christ*, and *Sufferings* of *Jesus*.

F.

- Early* rising encouraged, i. 122. See *Rising*.
- Earth*, its orbicular Form, ii. 132. Different Motions, annual and diurnal, 133, 161. It does appear large to us, and is most agreeably decorated, 136.
- Education* of Children urged upon Parents, as the best Evidence of Love to their Offspring, i. 19. The Neglect of this leaves Room for sorrowful Reflection (to Parents) when their Children are removed by Death,
- Faith* and *Love*, the Usefulness of these Graces, ii. 250, 268.
- Fame* best secured by a useful Life, filled with worthy Actions, with regard to others, i. 69, and laying up Treasure in Heaven for ourselves, 71.
- Father*, a religious one leaving the World, i. 42. taking an affecting Farewel of his Family, 45.

Floods,

I N D E X.

Floods, the Goodness of God in timing of them, ii. 282.

Flower-Garden, Reflections upon it, i. 121. Described, 160. Its Fragrancy, 163. See *Fragrancy*.

Flowers afford a pleasing Variety, i. 178. Were created for the Entertainment of Man, 203. Regularly display their respective Beauties, viz. the Snowdrop, Crocus, Violet, 186. The Polyanthus and Auricula, 187, 188. The Tulip, Anemone, and Rannunculus, 188, 189. The Carnation and Gilly-flower, 189, 190. Daffodil, 192. The Sun-flower, 220. The Passion-flower, 223. Beautiful in the Blossom above what they are in the Root and Bud, 206, 233. Transient in their Continuance, 243. See *Meditation*, and *Works of God*.

Fog. See *Rime*.

Fondness of fine Apparel exposed, i. 169.

Fragrancy of *Flowers*, i. 64, 206. Rather improved in the Night, ii. 127.

Frost, the Effects of it, ii. 295.

G.

Garden (Flower) Contemplations of, i. 121.

Garden (Kitchen) i. 149.

Glory. See *Happiness*.

God, Gratitude to him recommended, i. 4. His Condescension amazingly great, 7. His Presence with us should influence our Conduct, 8.

Is the Director of fortuitous Events, 28. Kind in with-holding what we may earnestly desire, 40. His Greatness, Immenfity, and Mercy, 124, 125. By different Ways, in Providence and Grace, is carrying on his own great Designs, 143. Difference between his Handy-work and that of Man, 181. His Wisdom and Goodness displayed in the flowery Creation, 179, 190. Particularly in the correct Structure of Flowers, 198. And the Season they make their Appearance in, 199. (See *Flowers*.) His Goodness in providing for the Entertainment of Man, 203, 211. In giving to Man an immortal, rational Soul, 207. Is the wonderful Disposer of the Rain, 211. Is the Author of Success in the Education of Youth, 217. His Grace, the Effects of it on the human Mind, 218. Is every where present, ii. 16. Observes all the Workers and Works of Darkness, 38. Is our special Preserver in Time of Sleep, 46. Is the proper Object of Fear, 58. Is the infinite Creator, 141. His Condescension wonderful, 146. His Power inconceivable, 158. His Patience unspeakable, 166. His Wisdom unsearchable, 168. His Love and Goodness immeasurable, 175. His Perfections appear with great Lustre in Redemption, 181.

I N D E X.

181. (See *Redemption*.) His Purity is beyond Conception, 185. His Bounty without Bounds, 192. His Tendernefs, 205. His Faithfulness, 206. His Attributes centre and shine in their fullest Lustre in Christ, 211, 215. Is the God of his People, 221. Is Lawgiver to the whole Creation, 226. Is ever present with those who fear him, 261. See *Jesus Christ*.
- Goodness* of God gloriously displayed thro' the whole Creation, ii. 175. Shines illustriously in Redemption, 181. See *God* and *Redemption*.
- Gospel*, of eminent Use to the Children of Men, ii. 294. See *Word* of God.
- Grace* of God, its glorious Effects, i. 218.
- Granvil* (Sir *Bevil*) his Character, i. 69.
- Gratitude* to God recommended, i. 206.
- Grave* (the) levels all Distinctions, and ends all Differences, i. 12. This should induce us to live humbly and peaceably one with another, *ibid*. Is the Receptacle of Infants, as well as of others, 14. Is a quiet Habitation, 58. Puts a Period to Beauty, Business, &c. 80. ii. 30.
- Grave* (the) a Poem so called, quoted, i. 104. Also commended and referred to, ii. 56.
- Gravitation*. See *Attraction*.
- Great Persons*, as to this World, possess little in the Territories of the Dead, i. 75.
- H.
- Happiness* of the Marriage-State represented, i. 39. Of the Righteous in the future World considered, 112, 175, 251. ii. 107, 225. Different Degrees of it, ii. 246.
- Heat*. See *Sun*.
- Heaven*, its unspeakable Felicity, i. 62, 251. Would afford none to the Ungodly, ii. 64. See *Happiness*.
- Heavens* (visible) declare the Glory of God, i. 124. ii. 129. And of *Christ*, i. 260. Are widely expanded, ii. 190, 191.
- Hills*. See *Mountains*.
- Holy Spirit* dwells in the Gracious, i. 7. This Consideration should oblige to Purity in Heart and in Life, 8. Is the great Agent in the Christian Oeconomy, ii. 254.
- Horace*, a Passage from him accommodated to Christianity, ii. 43.
- Horned Cattle*, the Distemper among them recognized, ii. 83.
- Humility* recommended to Man, ii. 62.
- Hymn* on Mortality, &c. i. 72. On the Frailty of Flowers, and of human Beings, 236. On the Creation, ii. 271. Some Account of a fine one on the Blood of *Christ*, i. 296.
- Jesus*

I N D E X.

I.

Jesus Christ, the Support of his People in Death, i. 61. the glorious Captain of their Salvation, 64. The most grateful Returns due to him, 68. His Death the Security of Believers, 92. Is the Judge, Friend, and Advocate of his People, 96. The Sun of Righteousness, 127, 135. Successful in his great and gracious Designs, 138. The Creator, Recoverer, and Preserver of all our Mercies, 154, 158, 193. His sweet-smelling Sacrifice for Sin, 165, 196. His Righteousness the most beautifying Robe, 172, 286. Is compared to the Rose and the Lily, 176, 177. Must be regarded by the Christian in every State, 221, 222. His exquisite Sufferings, 225. His Patience under them, 270. Is the everlasting Redeemer, 243. The Creator of Angels, 263. The Former of the visible Heavens, 263. The Comets, 265. Planets, 266. Sun, 267. Moon, 268. Thunder, 269. Lightning, 270. Clouds, 272. Rainbow, 274. Storms and Tempests, 275. Pestilence, 276. Heat, 277. Ocean, 277. Mountains and Woods, 278, 279. The Vine, 279. Meadows and Mines, 280, 281. Fountains, 282. Birds, 283.

Bees, 284. The Silkworm, 286. Cattle and other Creatures, 288. All summoned to sound the Redeemer's Praise, 289. Remarks on *Christ's* Stile, Pref. to vol. ii p. xv. He sweetens every Enjoyment, ii. 42. All Fulness is in him, and all our Supplies are from him, 94, 95. His Righteousness everlasting, 102. His Condescension wonderful, 147. His full Satisfaction and complete Atonement for Sin, 150. The happy Effects hereof, 153. Is the very Son of God, and the Redeemer of Man, 182. (See *Redeemer*.) Is the Fountain opened, 188. The Wisdom of God, 211. The Power of God, 213. In his personal Glory, and purchased Felicity, he surpasses human Conception, 238.

Imperfection, an Attendant on all Men here below, ii. 101.

Inconstancy. See *Instability*.

Industry, its apparent Usefulness, i. 214.

Infants drop into the Grave as well as others, i. 14.

Instability of all earthly Things, i. 138. The Moon a beautiful Emblem hereof, 96. Farther exemplified, *ibid.* 97.

Job, his Patience, outward Prosperity, and sudden Adversity, ii. 98.

Judgment of the Great Day, awful to the Ungodly, i. 107. The alarming Call to it, ii. 27.

Jupiter,

I N D E X.

Jupiter, his Magnitude computed, ii. 165, 190.

Justification before God by the Righteousness of *Christ* imputed to Sinners, i. 287. Several noted Authors who embraced this Doctrine, *ibid.* The Subject retouched, ii. 102.

Juvenal, a Quotation from him, i. 201.

K.

Knowledge, the best is from *Jesus Christ* and the Gospel, ii. 215. That which relates to this lower Creation is greatly imperfect while we are here, 268.

L.

Lark (the) early ascends and sings, i. 122.

Leighton (Archbishop) his select Works quoted and commended, ii. 306.

Liberality approved and enforced, i. 218.

Liberty and *Property* valuable Things, ii. 6.

Life, the Uncertainty of it should put us upon being ready to resign it, i. 25, 56, 235. The common Occurrences and even the Comforts of Life may put a Period to it, 32. The wretched Manner in which many pass away Life, ii. 75. Its being short is a Mercy to the Gracious, 280. See *Time*.

Lily of the Vallies, what, i. 176.

Love and *Faith* applauded, ii. 250 See *Faith*.

Lucas (Dr.) his Enquiry after Happiness approved, i. 55.

Lucretius, something noted from that Writer, i. 245.

M.

Man unable to discern what is most for his Good, i. 40. His best Actions imperfect and polluted, 166. Yet highly favoured of God, 206. This World, with its Furniture (in the main) made for Man, 208. Is gloriously accommodated and greatly obliged hereby, 211. Should carefully avoid Sin, 230. Hath but a transient Existence in this World, 235. ii. 20. The Religion of *Jesus* his great Support at Death, i. 237. God in *Christ* the abiding Portion of the Pious, 243. His Folly in fearing of Ghosts, and disregarding of God, ii. 57. In being alarmed at the Voice of an Owl, and slighting the certain Presages of his Dissolution, 66. One widely different from another in Circumstances, Conduct, Disposition, &c. 72. Of Eminence, his Faults and Failings observed, 103. His Virtues conspicuous and exemplary, 105. Little he is, and humble he ought to be, 142. His Impurity calls for Humility, 187. And should quicken his Application to *Christ*, 188. His Wants

I N D E X.

Wants and Weaknesses many and remarkable, 223. Should learn the Art of numbering his Days, 240. His *real* and *fancied* Excellencies, what, 306. All are little in the Sight of God, *ibid.*

Marriage, State of, its Happiness, i. 39. Painful Parting of an affectionate Pair by Death, described, 43, 44.

Meditation (transient) on the Death of an Infant, i. 14. On that of a Youth, 17. Of a young Man in the Flower of Life, 22. On one taken off by a sudden Stroke, 28. On a Lady who died in Childbed, 34. On a Father leaving his young Family, 41. On a Person taken from a Hurry of worldly Business, 48. On the Aged leaving the World, 53. On the Death of a Warrior, who bravely fell in fighting for his King and Country, 64. On *Jesus Christ* and his Death, *ibid.* 90. On the Resurrection of the Dead, 95. On Eternity, with respect to the Wicked and the Godly, 99, 111. On the Extent of the Heavens, 124, 263. ii. 241. On the rising Sun, i. 126, 266. On the Dew, 136. On the Country, 145. Fields and Meadows, *ibid.* Pastures and Groves, 146, 147. On an Orchard, 148. On a Kitchen-Garden, 149. On the Mountains and the Sea, 152. On the Fragrance of Flowers, 163. On their

beautiful Colours, &c. 167. On the Variety of Flowers, 178. On their regular Succession, 186. On their correct Structure, 198. On their well-timed Appearance, 199. On the exuberant Goodness of God to Man, 210. On the Sunflower, 220. On the Passion-flower, 223. On the Sensitive Plant, 229. On the transient Continuance of Flowers, 235. On a cool Retreat from the Rays of the Sun, 244. On the labouring Bee enduring the Heat of the Day, 249. On the Angels, 262. On the Heavens and Stars, 263, 264. On the Comets, i. 265. ii. 80. On the Planets, i. 266. On the Sun, *ibid.* ii. 137. Moon, i. 268. ii. 88, 94. Thunder, i. 269. Lightning, *ibid.* Clouds, 272. Rainbow, 274. Storms, 275. Pestilence, 276. Heat and Cold, *ibid.* 277. Ocean, *ibid.* Mountains and Woods, 278, 279. The Vine, *ibid.* Meadows and Mines, 280, 281. Fountains, 282. Birds, 283. Bees, 284. Silk-Worm, 285. Cattle and other Creatures, 288. On subduing the Rebellion (*an.* 1746) and our happy Deliverance thereby, ii. 2. On the setting of the Sun, 7. On the Twilight, 9. On the Coolness of the Evening, 12. On the Swiftness of Time, 19. (See *Time.*) On the Silence of the Night, &c. 26. (See *Night.*) On the State

I N D E X.

State of the Dead, 29. On the Darknefs of the Night, 35. On Sleep, 43. (See *Sleep*.) On the Appearance of Ghosts and Apparitions, 55. On the Screech-Owl, 63. Singing of the Nightingale, 70. On the Uncertainty of earthly Enjoyments, 96. On Righteousness, our own and *Christ's*, 100. On the Earth, its Form, &c. 132. (See *Earth*.) On the Greatness of God's Works, 138. On the Greatness and Condescension of God himself, 141. On the Greatness of human Guilt, and the Atonement made for the same by *Jesus Christ*, 150. (See *Atonement*.) On the Power of God, 158. On the Patience of God, 166. On the Wisdom of God, 168. On the Goodness of God, 175. (See *God* and *Goodness*.) On the Purity of the Heavens, and of the Creator of them, 185. On the Stability of the Heavens and of the Saints, 201. On God and ourselves, 222. On the Obedience of the heavenly Bodies to the Will of God, 226. Their gradual Appearance, &c. 232. (See *Stars*.) On the Extent of God's Creation, 255. (See *Creation*.) On the Worth of the Soul, and the Care this calls for, 263. (See *Soul*.) On a Winter's Day, 279. (See *Winter's Day* and *Night*.) On a Tempest, 283. (See *Tempest*.) On a dark Night and travelling therein,

287, 290. On a thick Rime, 292. On Frost, 295. (See *Cold*.) On Snow, 301. On a Thaw, 304. On the Evergreens, *ibid.* On the Hail, 307.

Mercy of God, the Riches and Glory of it, i. 125 ii. 194. Illustrated in the Parable of the Prodigal Son, 195. In the Case of *Manassah* and of *Paul*, 197. Of the Betrayers and Crucifiers of *Christ*, 199.

Milky-Way, numberless Stars therein, ii. 234.

Milton, Quotations from his Poetical Works, i. 108, 123, 124, 136, 145, 151, 164, 173, 174, 178, 195, 206, 208. ii. 9, 15, 37, 51, 70, 86, 89, 95, 151, 173, 210, 269, 271.

Ministerial Diligence encouraged by the Lustre of the Stars, ii. 241.

Mist. See *Rime*.

Moisture of the Earth, &c. wonderfully diversified in Vegetation, i. 182.

Monument of Mrs. *Stonhouse* exhibited, i. 114. Illustrated, 36. (See Advertisement prefixed to vol. i. p. v.) A mean Thing to rely on for preserving our Name and Fame to Posterity, 69.

Moon (the) described as rising, ii. 88. As shining, i. 268. Her Usefulness to the Inhabitants of the Earth, ii. 91. Shines with borrowed Beams, 94. Is incessantly changing her Aspect, &c. 96. Is the fit Emblem of sub-

I N D E X.

sublunary Things, 96. Is sometimes eclipsed, 103. Her Beams reflected by the Sea very beautiful to behold, 105. Is a Sort of Sovereign over the Ocean, 106. Stood still in the Days of *Jeshua*, 223.
Most Higheſt, applied to God, the Beauty of it, ii. 186.
Mother, the Lamentation of one over her dead Child, i. 19.
Motions of the planetary Bodies regulated by Projection and Attraction, ii. 248. See *Attraction* and *Projection*.
Mountains, their Uſefulneſs and Produce, i. 152.

N.

Nature, the whole of it obedient to God, ii. 229.
Neglect of the Duties of Life dangerous, i. 55. See *Death*, *Eternity*, *Life*, *Soul*, *Sudden Death*, *Wiſdom*.
Night, Meditations upon it, ii. 1. Silence an ordinary Attendant on it, 26. Ceſſation of Buſineſs in it, 28. Darkneſs of it, 35, 290. Apprehenſions of Ghoſts therein, 55. Noiſe of the Screech-Owl, 63. Singing of the Nightingale, 70. Appearance of the Glow-worm, 77. The Comet, &c. 80. See *Comet*, *Moon*, *Northern Light*.
Night, froſty, deſcribed, ii. 295.
Northern Lights noted, ii. 84.

VOL. II.

O.

Obedience rendered to God by inanimate Beings, ii. 226. The like from us is a reaſonable Service, 230.
Old Age, unattended with Grace, a ſad State, i. 54. Piety comfortable in this Part of Life, 57. See *Piety*.
Orbits of the Planets, of what Form, ii. 248.
Orchard deſcribed, with its uſeful Produce, i. 147, 148.

P.

Pardon for the greateſt of Sinners procured by *Jeſus Chriſt*, ii. 155.
Parents ſhould timely and tenderly inſtruct their Children. See *Education*.
Parnel, a Quotation from him, i. 87.
Peace among Proteſtants preſſed, i. 183.
Perfections of God. See *God*.
Perſecution on account of Religion diſclaimed, i. 186.
Perſeverance of the Saints thro' Grace unto Glory, a Doctrine embraced and owned by the Author, ii. 202. *Lime-ſtreet* Lectures commended upon this Occaſion, as contributing to ſettle his Judgment with reſpect to this Doctrine, 203. The weak and dangerous State of Man repreſented, 204. But by the Power, Faithfulneſs, and Tenderneſs of
Y God

I N D E X.

- God secured, 205, 206.
The Word of God eminently conducive to this, 208.
See *Word of God*.
- Piety*, a Spring of Comfort in Life, i. 57. At Death, 60.
Possessors of it happy beyond the Grave, 62, 237.
- Pitt*, his Poems quoted, i. 284.
- Plain-Dealer*, a Quotation therefrom, see Motto to the Medit. on the Tombs.
- Planetary Bodies* likely inhabited, ii. 137.
- Planets*. See *Jupiter*, *Saturn*, *Venus*.
- Pleasure* arising in the Mind from the flowery Creation, i. 173. The Spectator's Advice respecting this Pleasure, *ibid*. The Improvement the Author would make hereof, 177.
- Pliny*, a Quotation from his Epistles, i. 24.
- Poems* to the Author in Praise of his Performance, from several Hands, prefixed to vol i. from p ix. to xxx.
- Pole star*, its Properties, and peculiar Service to Man, ii. 242.
- Pope* (Mr.) quoted, i. 12, 32, 36, 134, 208, 210, ii. 77, 90, 186. His Saying, *Whatever is, is right*, how to be understood, i. 203. Some other Passages of his remarked on, 208, 210.
- Popery* always the same, a Pamphlet referred to, ii. 5.
- Power* of God, the Greatness thereof, ii. 158 Speaks Comfort to the Gracious, 161, 162. May well speak Terror to the Ungodly, 164. See *God*.
- Prayer* and Thanksgiving are Duties we daily owe to God, ii. 108. Many Considerations to recommend Prayer, &c. *ibid*. 109. It is both an honourable and an advantageous Employ, 219.
- Presence* of God every where, i. 16, 259. This enjoy'd is the highest Felicity, i. 174. ii. 18.
- Prior* quoted, i. 15, 171, 206, 233. ii. 76, 288.
- Projection*, or projectile Force, what, and how influential on the heavenly Bodies, ii. 248.
- Promises* of God sweetly supporting, i. 47.
- Providence* (divine) ought to be confided in for Raiment, as the Earth is so beautifully adorned, i. 168. And for Food, since the meaner Parts of the Creation are so well supplied, *ibid*. 169. All its Disposals should be acquiesced in, 200. (See *Submission*.) Is concerned for our Safety and Welfare in Sleep, ii. 49. (See *Sleep*.) Its Dispensations mysterious to us now, 173. Will be cleared up hereafter, 174. Should be relied upon by the Gracious, 258. See *God* and *Man*.
- Pythagoras*, a favourite Maxim of his remarked, i. 9.

R.

Rain, how happily and wonderfully disposed of, i. 211, 273.

Rain-

I N D E X.

- Rain-bow*, its Beauty, &c. considered, i. 274. ii. 308.
- Reason*, an insufficient Guide in what relates to Religion, ii. 78. Yet honourable and useful in its Place, 79.
- Rebellion* against God, most ungrateful and inexcusable, i. 213.
- Rebellion* (against King George, 1745) the Deliverance from it glorious, ii. 2. Our Case miserable, had the Enemy succeeded, 4.
- Redemption*, a more illustrious Display of the divine Perfections than Creation, ii. 181, 211. Exemplified in the Glory of the Redeemer, 182. Calls for Praise, 183. The Manner in which it was brought about wonderfully affecting, 212.
- Regeneration*. See *Conversion*.
- Religion*, the Sweetness and Usefulness of it, i. 57, 93, 237, 242. ii. 71. Is very consistent with the necessary Affairs, and even the truest Pleasures of the present Life, ii. 134. Is absolutely necessary to the Felicity of the future Life, 65.
- Resignation* to the Will of God. See *Submission*.
- Resurrection* of the Body, with the Consequences thereof, i. 95, 233. No Privilege to the Wicked, 106.
- Retirement*. See *Solitude*.
- Righteous*, their Happiness in the Resurrection, i. 95. In their meeting Jesus the Judge of All, 97. In their future State, 113.
- Righteousness* of Jesus Christ, imputed to Believers, i. 172, 287. See *Justification*.
- Rime* (a thick) a Description of it and its Effects, ii. 292, 293.
- Rising* early in the Morning encouraged, i. 123.
- Rollin*, his Antient History quoted, i. 191.
- Romances*, &c. their mischievous Effects, ii. 79.
- Rose*, Casimir's Address to it, i. 199.

S.

- Satisfaction* for Sin. See *Atonement*, &c.
- Saturn*, his Magnitude, as computed, ii. 165.
- Screech-Owl*, his Place of Abode, and terrifying Voice, ii. 63. Folly of Mankind in being affrighted hereat, 66.
- Scripture-Learning* the most valuable, i. 161.
- Sea*, some Considerations relating to it, i. 152, 277. Its Surface affords a pleasing Prospect at the going-down of the Sun, ii. 7. Reflects the Lustre of the Moon also, 105. Its Tides noted, 106. See *Storm* and *Tempest*.
- Seasons* of the Year being different, produce correspondent Effects, ii. 277.
- Seneca* quoted, i. 62. ii. 13, 144.
- Sensitive-Plant*, considered and spiritually improved, i. 229.
- Sickness* and Sufferings have their Use to the Gracious, ii. 39, 295.

I N D E X.

- Sin*, the Greatness and Heinousness of it, ii. 150.
- Sincere Christian*, a comprehensive Character, i. 36.
- Sinners*, their Obstinacy no Disappointment to the Saviour, i. 142. Are wrought upon in different Ways, 143.
- Sleep*, its remarkable Usefulness, ii. 43. It is the Gift of God, and a Proof of his Goodness, 45. Preservation in Sleep a further Proof of divine Favour, 46. It strangely prevents the proper Exercise of our Senses, 53. And yet their Use is instantaneously restored upon waking, 54.
- Snow*, its Fall and Effects, ii. 301. Its Use, 303.
- Solitude, its Usefulness, and how to be improved, ii. 13, 71.
- Solomon's* Dedication of the Temple, some Remarks thereon, i. 5.
- Soul* (of Man) its Excellence and Importance, ii. 263. Claims the utmost Concern of Ministers and others, 265.
- Spectator* quoted. See the Motto to the *Reflections on a Flower-Garden*, i. 115. Also 121, 133, 169, 173, 204, 213, 296. ii. 143, 181, 271.
- Stackhouse*, his *History of the Bible* quoted, ii. 171.
- Starry Heavens*, Contemplations on them, ii. 125.
- Stars* of Heaven, a glorious Part of the Creation, i. 264. Fix'd ones, each a Centre to a particular System, ii. 139. Their immense Distance from the Earth, *ibid.* 237. Their fighting in their Courses against *Sisera*, 228. Their gradual Appearance in the Evening, 232. The more attentively viewed, the greater Number discovered, *ibid.* Yet many remain undiscovered by the best Eye, assisted with Art, 235. They appear to us but as glittering Points, 236. Have their Usefulness to our World, 238. (See *Pole-Star.*) Shine with an excelling Lustre, 241. Differ in their apparent Magnitude and Splendor, 245.
- Sternhold* (Mr.) a Passage of his applauded, i. 126.
- Stonhouse* (Mrs. Anne) some Remarks on her Monument, i. 36. A Plate representing it, 114. See *Monument.*
- Storm*, one described, i. 275. ii. 32. See *Tempest.*
- Stow*, the Name of a noble Seat, now demolished, i. 3.
- Striking* of a Clock, how to be improved, i. 78.
- Submission* to God, our incumbent Duty, i. 200. ii. 170. The Perfections of the Divine Being bind this upon us, *ibid.* 179. We are incompetent Judges of the divine Dispensations, 173. Should therefore wait the appointed Time, *ibid.* See *Providence.*
- Sudden Death* of others should be improved by us, i. 26. Is under the Direction of Providence, 28. A Reflection upon it, 29. Farther illustrated, 33, 56.
- Suffer-*

I N D E X.

- Sufferings of Jesus Christ* considered, i. 64, 225. Sin the Cause of these Sufferings, 165. For the Greatness of these Sufferings, and the glorious Effects of them, see the *Descant on Creation* throughout, 259. See *Jesus Christ*.
- Summer Morning* described, i. 122.
- Sun*, natural, a glorious Body, and an Emblem of *Jesus Christ*, i. 127. Its precious and penetrating Influences on the Earth, 128. Its Heat when immoderate, the Effects of it, 246, 276. Its apparent and real Motion, amazing Bulk, &c. ii. 137. Its nicely-proportioned Distance from the Earth, 171. Its standing still in the Days of *Joshua*, 227.
- Sun-Dial*, a Motto thereon, ii. 26.
- T.
- Tempest*, one described, ii. 283. Its terrible Effects on Land and at Sea, 284, 285. Should affect the Mind of Man, *ibid.* See *Storm*.
- Temptations* should speedily be resisted, i. 230.
- Tendernefs* of God towards his People, ii. 205.
- Thomson* (Mr.) his Seasons quoted, i. 76, 139, 167. Pref. to vol. ii. xvi. 174, 178, 262.
- Thought*, in which Sense not to be employed for the Body, ii. 224.
- Tides* of the Sea useful, and regulated by the Moon, ii. 106.
- Time* is precious and speedily passing away, ii. 19. Does appear short in the Review, 20. Much Work to be done in it, 22. Will soon come to its Period with respect to us, 23, 29. Is a valuable Commodity, but wretchedly abused by many, 72.
- Tombs*, Meditations among them, i. 1. It is our Wisdom to converse with them, 11. This will instruct us how little the great Persons and Things of this World are, 77.
- Twilight*, its Usefulness and natural Cause, ii. 10, 35.
- U.
- Variations* in the Face of Nature delightful and useful, ii. 32.
- Vault* (burying) described, i. 73.
- Vegetation*, some of the Wonders therein, i. 182. Happily promoted by the Rays of the Sun, 131.
- Venus* (the Planet) a Remark thereon, ii. 94. This, with the rest of the planetary Bodies, resemble our Earth, and it is probable are inhabited, 136.
- Vice*, more ominous to a Kingdom than the Appearance of a Comet, ii. 81. See *Comet*.
- Victory* over the Rebels at *Culloden*, the glorious Effects of it, ii. 3.
- Violet*, an Emblem of modest Virtue and active Beneficence, i. 187.
- Virgil* quoted, i. 39. ii. 63.
- Vitringsa*, his rendering of *Isaiah xxxviii. 11.* approved, ii. 30.

I N D E X.

Unbelief highly unreasonable, ii. 208.

Universe, a Poem, quoted, ii. 235, 262.

W.

Walk (a) in the Evening described, ii. 1. On the Summit of a Hill, 125.

Watts (Dr.) quoted, i. 222. ii. 26. again referred to, 144, 231. Weakness and Folly of Man in some Instances, ii. 56, 66. See *Perseverance* of the Saints.

Wicked Men, their unhappy State living and dying, i. 101, 105. In the Resurrection and Judgment, 106. and to Eternity, 108. (See *Eternity*.) The truest Proof of our Respect to them lies in persuading them to seek the Lord for Salvation, 109. Their Conversation is dangerous, ii. 287.

Widow, in the Gospel, her disconsolate Case affectingly described, ii. 73.

Winds, sometimes piercingly cold, ii. 298.

Winter's Day, described as short, ii. 279. As wet, 281. Tempestuous, 283. See *Tempest*. *Winter's Night*, see *Night*.

Wisdom (true) wherein it does consist, ii. 57.

Word of God graciously powerful, ii. 208. Of great Use for the Comfort and Establishment of the Gracious, 209. It gives Encouragement to pray, to hope for the Spirit as a Comforter,

and in *Christ* as a Mediator, &c. *ibid*. The better it is attended to, the more doth its Excellence appear, 235. It gives sure Directions to future Happiness, 244. Is effectual for the Ends and Purposes for which given, 303. See *Gospel*.

Works of God are all perfect, particularly the Formation of Flowers, 180. Should be considered by us with what Views, ii. 130. Are immensely great and manifold, 138, 255. A pleasing Variety in them, 302. See *God*, *Providence*, and *Redemption*.

Worldly mindedness, the Folly of it exposed, i. 49.

Worlds, many, formed by the great Creator, ii. 139. the present one inconsiderable among the Works of God, 143. Worlds of Matter and of Life, both display the Goodness and Beneficence of the great Creator, 175.

Y.

Young (Dr.) his *Night Thoughts* quoted, i. 11, 26, 52, 110, 166, 244. ii. 128, 145, 256, 265. Farther quoted and applauded, i. 94. ii. 8, 219. See Motto to the *Descant on Creation*, to the *Contemplations on Night*, and the *Starry Heavens*.

Youth and *Strength*, no Security from the Grave, i. 22. This calls for a diligent Preparation for Death, 26.

A
T A B L E
O F T H E
T E X T S

More or less illustrated in this WORK.

N. B. *As Dr. SHAW, in the Supplement to his Excellent Book of Travels, and several other Authors of the greatest Eminence, have given an Index of Scriptures, occasionally explained in their Writings; I take Leave to follow their Example. And flatter myself, that I shall oblige many of my Readers, by what I here subjoin; those especially, whose Taste is happily formed to relish the Beauties of the sacred Records.*

Chap.	Ver.	Vol.	Page
G E N E S I S.			
XXX.	1.	I.	40.
XLVII.	8.	II.	21.
D E U T.			
XXXII.	29.	I.	10, 11.
J O S H.			
X.	12, 13.	II.	228.
J U D G.			
V.	20.	II.	228.
V.	30.	I.	170.
I S A M.			

T E X T S illustrated.

Chap.	Ver.	Vol.	Page
I SAM.			
XXVIII.	19.	I.	68.
I KINGS			
VIII.	27.	I.	5, 6.
XX.	40.	II.	32.
XXII.	34.	I.	29.
NEHEM.			
IX.	6.	II.	235.
JOB			
IV.	{ 14, 15, 16, } { 17, 18, 19. }	II. }	59, 60, 61, 62.
IV.	19.	I.	23.
V.	23.	II.	292.
VII.	20.	II.	150.
IX.	8.	I.	91.
IX.	25, 26.	II.	20.
XIX.	25.	I.	243, 244.
XXII.	14.	I.	91.
XXII.	16.	II.	99, 100.
XXII.	20.	II.	163.
XXV.	5, 6.	II.	187, 188.
XXVI.	14.	II.	140, 141.
XXXVIII.	25.	I.	211, 212.
XXXVIII.	30.	II.	296.
PSALM			
VIII.	3, 4.	II.	146.
XXIII.	1.	II.	221.
XXVII.	1.	II.	221.
XXVII.	4.	I.	176.
XXXIII.	6, 9.	II.	160.
XLV.	9.	I.	166.
LI.	7.	II.	157, 158.
XCVI.	5.	II.	235.
XCVII.	2.	II.	175.
CIV.	3.	I.	91.
CIV.	24.	I.	180.
CVIII.	4.	I.	125.
CX.	3.	I.	139, 140.
CX.	7.	I.	140, 141, 142.
CXXXVI.	9.	II.	93.
CXXXIX.	2.	II.	39.
CXXXIX.	7, 8, 9.	II.	17.
CXXXIX.	11.	II.	38.
CXLVIII.	3, 4.	II.	235.

PRO-

TEXTS illustrated.

Chap.	Ver.	Vol.	Page
PROVERBS			
IV.	15.	I.	232.
ECCLES.			
XII.	3, 5.	I.	53.
CANTIC.			
II.	1.	I.	176.
VI.	10.	II.	101.
ISA.			
II.	11.	II.	285.
IX.	3.	II.	190.
XIV.	23.	II.	82.
XXIX.	8.	II.	52.
XXXIII.	15.	I.	232.
XXXIII.	17.	I.	174.
XXXV.	1.	I.	216.
XXXVIII.	11.	II.	30.
XL.	12.	II.	168.
XL.	15.	II.	141, 142.
XL.	29, 30, 31.	II.	162, 163.
XLI.	10.	II.	204.
XLII.	3.	II.	206.
XLIX.	13.	II.	183, 184.
LI.	6.	I.	264, 265.
LI.	16.	I.	264.
LIII.	3.	I.	274.
LV.	13.	I.	216.
LVIII.	10.	I.	219.
LXI.	10.	I.	172.
JEREM.			
XXXI.	12.	I.	216.
XLIX.	11.	I.	46.
EZEK.			
XVI.	63.	II.	153.
DAN.			
IX.	24.	II.	102.
XII.	3.	II.	241, 242.
HABAK.			
I.	9.	II.	298.
III.	4.	I.	194, 195.
III.	11.	II.	228.
ZECH.			
IX.	17.	II.	179.
XIII.	1.	II.	188.
XIII.	7.	II.	169.

MATT.

TEXTS illustrated.

Chap.	Ver.		Vol.	Page
		MATT.		
VI.	25.		II.	224.
XXIV.	44.		I.	27.
		LUKE		
I.	46, 47.		II.	190.
VII.	12.		II.	73, 74.
XIV.	23.		I.	186.
XV.	11, &c.		II.	195, 196.
XVIII.	19.		II.	179, 180.
		JOHN		
I.	3.		I.	196.
III.	3.		II.	65.
V.	17.		I.	158.
X.	9.		I.	223.
XI.	26.		I.	93.
XII.	32.		II.	217.
XIV.	6.		I.	223.
XIV.	9.		II.	119.
		ACTS		
IX.	1.		II.	197.
XX.	28.		II.	156.
		ROM.		
V.	8.		II.	181, 182.
V.	20.		II.	196, 197.
XIII.	14.		I.	172.
		I COR.		
I.	24.		II.	212, 213, 214.
I.	30.		II.	95.
VIII.	1.		II.	268.
XV.	41, 42.		II.	246.
		2 COR.		
IV.	17.		II.	41.
VI.	16.		I.	9.
XI.	8.		II.	192.
		GAL.		
II.	20.		I.	229.
		EPH.		
III.	8.		II.	186.
III.	10.		II.	213.
III.	18, 19.		II.	149, 150.
III.	20.		II.	164.
V.	2.		I.	165.
		PHILIP.		
II.	6, 7, 8.		II.	147, 148.
III.	10.		I.	229.

TEXTS illustrated.

Chap.	Ver.		Vol.	Page
		COLOSS.		
I.	14, 15, 16.		I.	196, 197.
II.	3.		II.	215, 216.
		HEB.		
I.	2, 3.		I.	197.
VII.	26.		II.	153, 154.
VIII.	10.		II.	220.
XII.	2.		I.	221, 222.
		1 PET.		
I.	12.		II.	216.
		2 PET.		
III.	10.		II.	86.
		REV.		
X.	{ 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. }		II.	{ 23, 24, 25.
XII.	1.		I.	268.
XXI.	1.		I.	278.

F I N I S.

